India

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NOTES AND NEWS.

THE "Bill to amend the law relating to the Municipal Affairs of the Town and Suburbs of Calcutta and to authorise the extension of the same to the Town of Howrah" is now before us. It makes a goodly volume. It is divided into 11 parts, sub-divided into 42 chapters, and consisting of 668 sections; and there are appended no fewer than 20 schedules. Already, however, we have been enabled to deal with the really crucial provisions, and with the Memorial presented by the great public meeting to the Lieutenant-Governor. We have now also before us the "Statement of Objects and Reasons," and a print of the speeches made in Council. From a survey of these in full, we are able to see still more clearly the factitious conduct of the Government and the essential reasonableness of the public protest against the proposed revolution in the system of local self-government in Calcutta. Mr. Norendra Nath Sen, speaking in his place in Council, said:—

I am prepared to give my cordial support to a Bill which seeks to remove the uncertainties and supply the deficiencies of the Act, and to give the Corporation and the Calcutta public, in its place, a well-considered and effective code with clear and unambiguous provisions. I regret, however, that the present Bill goes much further, and seeks to introduce radical changes in the constitution of the Municipality which are of a distinctly retrograde character, and entirely subversive of the principles of local self-government in the Municipal Administration of Calcutta. In fact, sir, I do not think that a measure of a more reactionary and revolutionary character has ever been introduced in this Council, and not only the Indian ratepayers of this city, but also all Indian inhabitants outside the limits of Calcutta, have been struck with dismay and consternation, and there is quite a panic among them. I am not in the least exaggerating the popular feeling on the subject. With all the pains that the Executive Government has taken to find a plea for the justification of its action in moving the Legislature in this matter, I submit, sir, that not a shadow of a case has been made out against the Calcutta Municipal Corporation for striking a blow at its constitutional independence. So far as the principle of the Bill is concerned, I may be pardoned for characterising the measure as a great mistake. It is unnecessary, unjust, and uncalled for.

The arguments urged in detail by Mr. Norendra Nath Sen, followed by the overwhelming speech of Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjea, would have conclusively disposed of the Bill before any judicial tribunal. Yet the Bill will, it is feared, go through by a majority of three to one. To pass such legislation in the teeth of local feeling agitated to the point of panic—what is this but monumental folly?

The existing Calcutta Municipal Consolidation Act has been in operation since April 1, 1889. Why is it to be set aside in favour of this retrograde Bill? Let us tabulate the grounds of the action of Government as gathered from the "Statement of Object and Reasons":—

1. "Actual experience and the decisions of the Courts have shown" the Act "to be in many instances imperfectly drafted and to stand in need of material alteration."

2. "The necessity of legislation was originally urged upon Government in order to enable the Commissioners to recover license tax from certain companies which now escape payment, and in order to supply an omission in Section 237 of the Act which renders it impossible for the Commissioners to exercise effective control over rebuilding and alterations in buildings."

3. "Since the amendment of the law in respect of these points was decided on, facts were brought to light in connexion with the alarm of plague in Calcutta which showed that the town was in a terribly insanitary condition, and that the present constitution of the Municipality is ill-adapted to stand the strain of a grave and sudden emergency, and fails to secure the prompt and continuous executive action which is necessary in view of the fact that the sanitation and conservancy of the great Indian maritime cities has now become a matter of international concern."

4. "About the same time it came to notice that the collection of rates had for a long time been defective; that important branches of the accounts had fallen into confusion; and that considerable uncertainty prevailed as to the respective functions of the Chairman and the Corporation."

5. "It has long been recognised as a defect in the present law that the European community is inadequately represented, and does not exercise the influence to which it is entitled."

6. "The Bill is intended not only to remedy these defects, but also to provide for a responsible municipal executive, and to furnish this executive with a law adequate to the present sanitary requirements of the City, and to modern standards of municipal administration."

Such being the reasons for fresh legislation, the question at once arises: Are these reasons valid? They are admitted to be partly valid; indeed, there is no municipal organisation in the world against which a similar set of reasons might not be arrayed. The next question is: What shall be the remedy? Will any unprejudiced man say that an ample remedy might not be provided by a few simple modifications of the Act which would, as Mr. Norendra Nath Sen points out, be welcomed by every reasonable ratepayer in Calcutta? And yet the Government has entered on a sweeping reconstruction which has thrown the whole population into panic, and which insults the Native intelligence. Even the Anglo-Indian papers have warned the Government that it is impossible to conduct a decent, effective, and uncorrupt administration of the city if the Natives be alienated, as this Bill evidently does and will alienate them, from cordial co-operation.

The plain fact of the matter is that the Government has seized the opportunity of weaknesses in the working of the Act—such weaknesses as are bound to show themselves eventually in any possible Act—not to repair the Act, but to overthrow the constitution of Calcutta local self-government. The thing could not have been engineered without the opportune menace of the plague. There is not another point in the whole indictment that could have afforded even a plausible excuse; no, nor yet all the other points of the indictment taken together. Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjea hit the nail on the head:—

Sir, if we examine the matter a little closely, we shall find that my honourable friend (Mr. Risley) has undertaken a task beset with serious difficulties. It will not be enough for him to show that in regard to the municipal administration of Calcutta there has been a failure here, a defect there, a breakdown elsewhere. He must carry his evidence much farther than that. He must show that the system has so completely failed, the situation is so desperate, that no partial remedy will suffice, that there must be a radical and fundamental change, that the system must be broken up, the site cleared for the erection of a new and a totally different superstructure. Nay, more, he must advance a stage yet further. My hon. friend must show that in the actual circumstances of Calcutta, menaced by the plague, the only remedy that is left open to us as sensible and wise men is to adopt the discredited municipal system of Bombay, which was not able to keep out the plague. A more desperate position—one more entirely at variance with the dictates of reason and sound sense—it would be difficult to conceive.

The argument is irrefragable, and Mr. Banerjea supported it in detail with such cogency as to leave the project a wreck. He pointed out that precedent, as well as mere fairness, required a preliminary commission of enquiry. Coming to the fundamental point of alleged insanitariness, he cited from "The Bitter Cry of Outcast London" passages that undoubtedly "put to shame the most vivid descriptions of the insanitary condition of the worst parts of Calcutta." Then he exhibited the condition of Calcutta in 1863 and 1876, and asked what use the elected Commissioners had then made of the "filthy bequest" they received from the justices. "Why, sir," he answered, "they turned it to splendid account. They introduced sanitary improvements which have converted a city which from a sanitary point of view was a scandal to a civilised administration, into a city which is one of the healthiest in India, to which our countrymen flee in hundreds and thousands, driven from their malaria-stricken homes in the Mofussil, as to a health-resort."

As to the allegation that "the Corporation is unequal to a grave and sudden emergency," said Mr. Banerjea, "I dispute the proposition. There is absolutely no evidence in support of this view of the matter. Whatever evidence there is distinctly negatives it." Thereupon he set forth the actual steps that had been taken on the first suspicion that the plague might spread to the capital. Instead of the Commissioners being pressed to their duty by the Government, as the Government alleged, "they were pressing an indifferent executive, strangely insensible to the exigencies of the crisis, to do their duty. This view of the matter," he added, "will be amply supported by a reference to the proceedings of the Commissioners." Turning to a short criticism of the action of the Bombay Corporation, Mr. Banerjea clinched his argument in these words: "What therefore is proposed is this—that the municipal system of Calcutta, which was tried by the stress and the strain of the plague, and which on the whole was not found wanting, is to be superseded by a municipal system which notoriously failed to meet the crisis!"

The plague, then, without which the Government could never have been enabled to embark on this ill-omened enterprise, has failed it, for the Corporation has kept the disease under control so successfully that we have heard less of the plague in Calcutta than of doubts whether it was in the city or no. The insanitariness of the city, so far as admitted, arises, as Mr. Banerjea pointed out, mainly from defects in the structural arrangements of the city—defects for which neither the commissioners nor the system under which they work are responsible. Besides, the "new legislation cannot be made retrospective"; and therefore "it is not laws, but funds that are needed." The complaint that it is impossible to fix responsibility Mr. Banerjea promptly disposed of, not without a bitter touch of contempt, by showing clearly that during the twenty-two years of his connexion with the Corporation there has never been "the smallest difficulty in fixing responsibility for the various sins of omission and commission that were discovered." There is not the slightest objection anywhere to the appearance of European members on the Corporation. "We deplore," says Mr. Banerjea, "the want of interest on the part of the European community in our municipal concerns. We should rejoice if they could be persuaded to co-operate with us in our municipal work." The laws have been modified in 1876, and again in 1888, to that very end. The constituencies are open to them as well as to Indians. But every attempt to get them to co-operate has substantially broken down, and it requires an abnormal faith to hope that the new Bill will improve matters. The only chance lies in the Government's whipping them up for its own purposes.

But the essence of the whole matter is that, while the Corporation outwardly is constituted on the old basis, the whole effective power is thrown into the hands of the chairman and the executive committee. The Corporation is eviscerated. The only consolation is that the thing will not work. The conflict of three co-ordinate authorities will at once reduce the body to the chaos of American city government. The abler Indians will stand aside, sullen onlookers. The European members, led by the nose by the caprice of Government, will exercise a tyranny in the capital of India. And, while the results will flourish exceedingly in official reports, the people at home will marvel more and more at the unaccountable perversity and ingratitude of the "Babu." We earnestly appeal to our contemporaries at home to inform their readers of the nature of the proposed legislation, and to point such moral as they may draw from the extraordinary history of this Calcutta Municipality Bill. To our minds it is significant of grave Imperial danger.

The *Bengalee* points out that the Anglo-Indian journal, *Capital*, hitherto a strong supporter of the Calcutta Municipal Bill, is nevertheless dissatisfied with the arrangements for the new executive. In fact *Capital* attributes whatever it finds unsatisfactory in the present executive rather to the weakness of the executive than to the machinations of wicked Babus. But in some further remarks this paper really strikes at the root of the new Bill:—

The reason why European business-men take so little interest in the Municipality is because such honorary work is not attractive in India. Europeans do not come to India for change of air; they come here to make money, and when they have succeeded in doing it they generally retire to whence they came. While engaged in this process of money-making, they are not disposed to gratuitously give their time to municipal affairs; hence it is that there is such a poor attendance usually at these meetings, and that it is only when something especially interesting or important turns up that a large attendance is secured.

And it is from these men, so busy in their haste to get rich and leave the country, that the majority of the new ruling body is to be drawn! But we still hope that the Bill may be at least postponed for further consideration.

One is glad to learn from the Calcutta papers that the ratepayers of the town are taking active steps to defeat the Municipality Bill. A committee, it may be remembered, was appointed by the recent Town Hall meeting to make arrangements for effective opposition to the measure. Funds are being collected for the purpose of a sustained campaign against what is without doubt one of the most reactionary pieces of legislation which an unsympathetic administrator ever conceived to arrest the progress of a loyal people. Rájá Benoy Krishna Deb Bahadur, a scion of an ancient house which has been friendly to British rule since the days of Clive and Hastings, has consented to receive subscriptions. There is evidently great determination among the ratepayers. If Sir John Woodburn passes the unfortunate measure left behind by his predecessor, he will be defying the strong opposition of the people, and deepening that discontent which is becoming a source of danger in India.

Sir Alexander Mackenzie's scheme is to demolish self-government in Calcutta, to withdraw all real executive power from the Hindus and Mahometans, who form nine-tenths of the population and pay two-thirds of the tax, and to place it in the hands of European Commissioners appointed by the Government and the Chambers of Commerce. The passage which we have quoted above is from the organ of the European commercial class in Calcutta. Non-official Europeans in Calcutta have not time for municipal or other gratuitous work. Those who are willing to do it and have done it successfully for 22 years are to be divested of their powers apparently because they are Indians—"jays and carrion-kites," in the amiable words of Sir Alexander Mackenzie.

Even the *Pioneer*, which wholly disagrees with the grounds of opposition adopted by the Natives of Calcutta, is unable to accept the plan of leaving the Corporation unaltered and reforming its executive head:—

The plan of building a house from the top and making later arrangements for the foundations is open to the obvious and reasonable objection that it entails unnecessary risks; and there is no exaggeration in simply recognising the resemblance between the proposed Calcutta plan of superimposing a grand new executive committee, a good enough headpiece in itself, upon an understructure such as that gathered together under the name of the Calcutta Corporation.

And again:—

The whole future of Calcutta sanitation has been plumped upon an experiment in placing a powerful European executive committee, like a head of gold, upon a framework of inferior material that may not bear it. It is doubtful how far the new scheme, which practically places everything in the hands of the chairman and a small group of Europeans who may or may not be led by him, will secure the support of the more experienced European commissioners themselves.

Is it not folly to adopt a scheme for transferring to a few European Commissioners duties which the organ of European commerce says they have no time to discharge, and which the *Pioneer* thinks may not receive their approval?

The scheme which the *Pioneer* suggests is briefly explained:—

Sir John Woodburn may think it still possible to set on foot an enquiry into the incidence of municipal taxes in Calcutta, and the relative claims of Europeans and Natives on the substantial ground of their respective contribution to the rates.

This certainly is a more equitable proposal than the present Bill. According to the figures given in our last issue, about two-thirds of the taxes are paid by Hindus and Mahometans, and a third by the Government and the European and Eurasian communities in Calcutta. If representation is to be related to taxation, two-thirds of the Municipal Commissioners and two-thirds of the governing executive body should be Hindus and Mahometans, and a third should be Europeans. We do not suppose that the

people of Calcutta would object to an arrangement of this kind.

The financial difficulties of many Indian cities in consequence of the plague have been referred to more than once in these columns. Lately the municipality of Madras, already heavily burdened and with the prospect of a large expenditure in the near future, asked the Government for a grant of Rs. 60,000. The Government regretted that there were no spare funds for the purpose, but did not leave the petitioners entirely without help. It generously gave them the benefit of its advice, and suggested that the money should be raised either by loan or by making present taxes more productive, or by imposing additional taxation. The Bombay four per cent. loan was a failure; it is not pretended that any possible improvement in the exaction of the present taxes can yield the sum needed; and the weight of the taxes already existing is crushing. With this pleasant prospect before them the citizens of Madras may find consolation in remembering that India, on the authority of the highest officials, is able to pay not only the expenses of her own government, Imperial and local, but the whole cost of the wars beyond the frontier.

The journals to hand by the last mail show that meetings are being held in Madras by the ratepayers of the town for the erection of new hospitals and segregation camps, in view of the spread of the plague. Fortunately for Madras every municipal division of the city contains a fair number of wealthy people, who will not stint their generosity on such an occasion. The *Madras Standard* expresses the confident belief "that at this crisis every man who has any idea of what plague is and what havoc it will commit, will do his level best to enable the authorities to keep the pestilence from the city, or in the event of its breaking out here, to stamp it out before it has had time to count many victims."

The *Pioneer* usefully recalls the views expressed in May, 1880, by Lord Lytton on the question of a garrison for the Khyber. He said:—

> I sincerely hope that the Government of India will not be easily persuaded to keep troops permanently stationed in the Khyber. I feel little doubt that such a course would tend rather to cause trouble than to keep order. Small bodies would be a constant provocation to attack: large bodies would die like flies. . . . . I believe that the Pass tribes themselves, if properly managed, will prove the best guardians of the Pass, and be able as well as willing to keep it open for us if we make it worth their while to do so.

No doubt, owing to the new water supply at Lundi Kotal, the Pass is not quite so unhealthy as it was eighteen years ago, but in the main Lord Lytton's argument holds. It is all the more weighty as he was a decided advocate of the "forward" policy.

The *Daily News* gave prominence to the following paragraph on Friday last, October 14:—

> The appointment of the new Indian Finance Minister has been well received in English official circles. "Mr. Dawkins," writes a correspondent, "is a strong man, and I understand that the new Viceroyalty is not to be one of military adventure, or of too rapid railway extension, but one of retrenchment and of fiscal and administrative improvement. This will be a disappointment to the Simla military people, but Sir William Lockhart, the new Commander-in-Chief, is by no means bent on frontier fighting. It is said, at any rate, that the instructions for the new *régime* are to concentrate attention on internal administration, on fiscal reform, and on the measures needed to encourage trade and industry, and above all to secure financial equilibrium."

Which (one can only say) is "important if true."

Good news comes from Bombay. Mr. Jamsetjee N. Tata with characteristic liberality has placed at the disposal of the Bombay Government the large sum of thirty lakhs of rupees for the purpose of founding a teaching university. "It is proposed," writes an Indian correspondent, "to establish chairs, especially in mechanical and applied sciences and practical chemistry, for the prosecution of original researches. No doubt there will be an adequate laboratory, and men like Dr. Bose will have the chance of prosecuting scientific enquiries which the India Office refused by declining to make the necessary grant. It may also be hoped that provision will be made for the collection and preservation of ancient Indian texts, manuscripts, and inscriptions, and of carrying on archæological researches in India. Men like Dr. Bhandarkar and the late Mr. Bhagwanlal Indraji are an honour to India and their services should be utilised."

Mr. Justice Ranade is doing good service in connexion with the Bombay University. Only lately he succeeded in bringing about a much-needed reform in the method of holding examinations for University degrees. He is now endeavouring to retain for the senate of the University the power of affiliating institutions which it has exercised for forty years, but which the Government of Bombay has now thought fit to usurp. Mr. Justice Ranade's proposal is that in each case a proposal of affiliation or withdrawal should be considered and determined by the senate on the recommendation of the syndicate, subject to the sanction of the Government. Surely this is a sensible and moderate proposal. Even an autocratic Government should be satisfied with the power of granting or withholding its sanction in each case.

It is a matter of common occurrence for the Indian Government to attack the verdicts of Indian juries. It has been reserved for what is known as the Burdwan murder case to show the Government equally ready to blacken the character or impugn the rulings of magistrates. Three young Hindus were accused of murder. One of them was the nephew of a leading pleader at Burdwan, and on the ground that the Sessions Judge was, as the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* puts it, "mortally afraid of him," the case was transferred to Alipore. Here, after a careful summing up, the jury unanimously acquitted the prisoners, and the Judge accepted their verdict. On this the Government instructed its legal advisers to move the High Court for a new trial, alleging that the Sessions Judge at Alipore had improperly refused to receive certain evidence. But the Chief Justice and Mr. Justice Bannerjee upheld his ruling. This sufficiently vindicates the legal knowledge of the Judge at Alipore. But what is to be said of the Judge at Burdwan whose character has been so seriously attacked?

To judge from the proceedings of the Currency Committee, says the *Bombay Champion*, two broad objects are clearly discernible: (1) to keep its proceedings as much in the dark as possible; and (2) to "impress into its service as witnesses a majority of those who may help the Committee in its foregone conclusion." Two Indian witnesses, adds the *Champion*, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and Mr. Romesh Dutt, submitted statements also, but "there was the silence of the grave. They have not yet been informed whether they will be called. And to complete this scandalous injustice, the Blue-book omits altogether the statements sent in by these two representative Indians." It is fair to add, however, that the statements referred to were of later date than the contents of the volume which has been issued, and it is quite possibly the intention of the Committee to include the statements in the next volume.

The perfection and beneficence of our government in India is shown in strange ways. Take, for instance, the following from an article in the *Hindu* dealing with the administration of justice in the Mofussil:—

> All sub-magistrates, except those called "stationary," are required by departmental rules to spend a fixed number of days in the month on circuit within their jurisdiction. The criminal work which they have to do every month could scarcely require more time than they actually spend at their headquarters; but they generally find it more convenient to dispose of a large portion of it while on circuit. And further, they find it particularly convenient to pitch their camps in obscure villages, the roads to which are anything but passable. The parties and witnesses in criminal cases to be heard before the ever-moving magistrate have to post over miles and miles of impassable roads to villages where they cannot obtain the barest necessaries of life—water and food. If the parties or witnesses appear, say, a few minutes after time they are mercilessly visited with the worst punishment which the sub-magistrate is entitled under the law to inflict. Nor is this the worst. Cases in which parties and witnesses answer to their names are never, as a rule, taken up, but are in most cases sent on, not to dates subsequent to that on which the sub-magistrate contemplates returning to the headquarters, but to dates when the magistrate is expected to be on circuit at some place inconvenient for the parties and witnesses in the particular cases to go to.

The *Hindu* calls for a total separation of revenue and magisterial functions. It is highly probable that the sub-magistrate's time when at headquarters is taken up by other work, and that this is one more instance of the starvation of the service owing to reckless war expenditure and the natural costliness of alien rule.

AN IRRESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

MR. W. C. BONNERJEE, on Tuesday evening, delivered at Croydon a remarkable address which we report in another part of our present issue. The subject of the address was expressed in the rather startling question, "Is the Government of India responsible to anyone?" and Mr. Bonnerjee on the spur of the moment added: "and if so, to whom?" The question is surely of peculiar importance to the people of this country; for as has often been said, and as Mr. Bonnerjee repeated, India and England are bound together for weal or for woe. Not only are most British families connected with India by ties of friendship, relationship, commercial enterprise, or official duty. More than that, the failure of British administration would be regarded by all the world as a marked sign of the beginning of British decadence. There is no principle of political affairs more firmly established among us than that Government is responsible to the people. It is plain, then, that Mr. Bonnerjee could hardly have chosen a more incisive or a more practically important question for discussion with his audience, and with the country at large.

Mr. Bonnerjee rapidly sketched the existing hierarchy of government as laid down in the books. The supreme ruler is nominally the Queen; really, the Secretary of State. In India is the Viceroy—to apply an old English political designation, the Queen's Lieutenant in India—with his Council at Calcutta or at Simla, and under him as Governor-General are the sub-governors of the half-dozen large divisions of the territory of India, designated by names varying in importance. The point, however, is to find the real seat of final responsibility. Who is it in the last resort who can bring to book an errant or peccant official? Who is it that can hang the man who brings disaster on the country? Mr. Bonnerjee took a historical retrospect of the times of John Company, when the organisation was at its strongest, and enumerated the safeguards then in operation. In those days supervision was exercised in the first instance by the Court of Directors; the Court of Directors in turn was subject to the Court of Proprietors; and behind and over both Courts stood the Board of Control, the President of which was a high Government official. Mr. Bonnerjee acknowledged that it is impossible to survey the history of the East India Company and to come to the conclusion that the affairs of India were not considered with regard to the interests of the people. The interests of the people may, indeed, have been a secondary consideration, but they were carefully watched, even if only as subsidiary to the main business of the Company. The assumption of the direct government by the Crown in 1858 gradually unveiled a very serious change indeed. But we may point out—what Mr. Bonnerjee had no time to enlarge upon—that the essential features of this change had been in disastrous operation long years before 1858. Writing in 1853, Sir John Kaye said:—

> In fact, the Board of Commissioners for the affairs of India is now one man—a fourth Secretary of State. He may, or he may not, have any knowledge of India, acquired from actual experience or the study of books, but his power to control the proceedings of the Court of Directors is absolute and complete. He has, constitutionally, in respect of all matters of internal administration, only a controlling power; that is, he is empowered to correct the despatches of the Court on all subjects that come under their consideration. But this unlimited power of correction is in effect co-extensive with the power of initiation, and it would be easy to name cases in which despatches relating to matters of internal administration have lost under the hands of the Minister all traces of their original significance, and have been made to convey sentiments the very opposite to those entertained by the members of the Court.

The Government had already grasped the full authority. The President of the Board of Control was restricted "constitutionally"; but "in effect" he could do just as he liked. Sir John Kaye illustrates the popularly misleading character of the constitution of the Indian Government at that time by a striking extract from the evidence of Lord Hardinge before the House of Commons in 1852:—

> After stating that the constitution of "the Secret Committee" was "a mystery not understood by the public," Lord Hardinge went on to illustrate his position. "I recollect," he said, "an instance in which an officer of very high position and ability in India had written a letter to the President of the Board of Control, in which he had, in somewhat indignant terms, complained of the Secret Committee; the letter which had come out to him being signed by the Chairman and Deputy-Chairman, this officer felt amazed, and wrote his letter to the President of the Board of Control. When I heard of it I wrote to him: 'I hope you have not sent the letter, for, though the order was signed by the Chairman and Deputy-Chairman, it in fact came from the President of the Board of Control,' with whom this officer was on friendly terms. This officer did not understand the mystery of the President of the Board of Control being in fact the Secret Committee; it is, however, a convenient arrangement.

"A convenient arrangement"! Well, that depends on the point of view. But it is to be remembered that already under this astonishing system the first Afghan war had been authorised, not by the Governor-General, not by the people of India, not by the people or by the Parliament of Great Britain, but by the sole and secret fiat of Sir John Cam Hobhouse, the President of the Board of Control in the late thirties. The one fact speaks as eloquently as a volume of commentary.

After the Mutiny the control of Indian affairs was placed directly in charge of the Secretary of State and his Council in London. To whom is this authority responsible? Is it not a ghastly farce to ask whether it is to the people of India? Lord Lawrence even said: "In doing the best we can for the people, we are bound by our own consciences, *not by theirs*." Sir Antony MacDonnell the other day simply paraphrased the same expression. To the Governor-General's Executive Council no Indian whatever has ever gained admission. To his Legislative Council, as well as to the subordinate Legislative Councils, natives of India have gained physical admission; but their powers are stringently limited to interpellation and comment, both of which are disregarded as far as is practically possible. The operation of the arrangement Mr. Bonnerjee effectively describes; and he is necessarily brought to the conclusion that Government recognises no sort of responsibility to the people beyond the haphazard dictates of the individual conscience.

We must therefore look elsewhere, and we necessarily turn to England. "There is a great tribunal at home," says Sir John Kaye, "a tribunal of the British public which takes cognisance of all their doings"—all the doings, that is, of "those to whom the administration of India is entrusted." Now this "tribunal" is either Parliament or the constituencies. Let us see the facts of this representation which look so effective on paper. We are, indeed, familiar with the discussion of Indian affairs in Parliament. Take the Indian Budget. The Secretary of State is bound by statute to lay the accounts before both Houses of Parliament, as Mr. Bonnerjee very fully points out. But they are never by any chance presented within the time specified, and we never heard of the Secretary suffering any penalty for the infringement of the statute. The Budget is presented, however, and what do we find? The merest handful of members are present; the discussion is perfunctory, and any serious critic is at once overborne and hustled out of court by the Secretary, not uncommonly aided by his predecessor. The whole thing is the merest farce. The House resolves that "it *appears* by the accounts laid before the House" that such and such are the totals for the last year but one: not a syllable of criticism or real control of the figures, the policy, or the administrators. In the last resort the Government of the day can call its supporters to heel and overbear all opposition, right or wrong. There is hardly an atom of really effective control exercised by the House of Commons. The formality of control is a delusion and a snare.

If we turn to the constituencies we experience a final sinking of the heart. We do not know how far Mr. Bonnerjee may be right in attributing the indifference of the people to the misapprehension that any interference of theirs might saddle them with additional taxes to meet the expense of carrying out their wishes. That at all events is a gross delusion, for India pays for everything Indian and much that is English, as Mr. Bonnerjee shows. We are glad to note that Mr. Bonnerjee gives the fullest credit to the people of this country for sympathy and honest fairness; that is perfectly just. "Our hearts are all right," as another speaker effectively put it; "but there is something wrong with our heads." It is the lack of knowledge. Now, it must be admitted that, like Mr. Grimwade, most people have but scant time, however willing, to inform themselves on Indian affairs, or even on foreign affairs, or even on general domestic affairs. Yet we glory in our "Imperial sway" and our "Imperial destiny."

Surely that binds us, were it only to save us from discredit, to take a general interest in our Imperial possessions. But even when war, famine, pestilence, and earthquake are crammed into a single year, they do but constitute a nine days' wonder; and we straightway forget. All the time, however, the government is going on, and there is no control whatever—not even retrospective control—on the part of the constituencies. The Government of India is absolutely irresponsible. What are the results? Mr. Bonnerjee could only refer to a limited number. There are unnecessary wars, depletion of the treasury, stoppage of internal development, embarrassment of natural progress, intense popular dissatisfaction, and by ordinary consequence the miseries and follies of repressive legislation. Mr. Bonnerjee did not exceed the justice of the case when he pronounced the indifference of the people of England to be criminal. It is a sad commentary on our "Imperialism." The strongest grounds exist for appeal to the leading newspapers to treat Indian affairs with more fulness, and, we may add, with more sympathy. Where is the solution? Mr. Bonnerjee, rightly, we take it, regards it as but "crying in the wilderness" to hope for the establishment of responsibility to the people of India—in our time at least, though sensible advances might be, and ought to be, gradually made. Is it more hopeful to expect that the Secretary of State will be brought to take up the attitude of an arbiter between the Government of India and the people of India? The omens are all adverse. The principle now in full vogue is for the Governor-General or other authority to secure beforehand the assent of the Secretary of State to his projects; with the result that, however obnoxious any project may be to the people, it is necessarily a foregone conclusion. Some revival of the system of periodical accountability before a Parliamentary Committee would do great good. Something must be done, and done speedily. And it is for the British constituencies to take the Indian Empire to heart and save it, and make it prosperous in the teeth of wrong-headed officialism.

LORD ELGIN'S DEFENCE.

LORD ELGIN, according to his own account, has been very unfortunate. During his Viceroyalty India has been afflicted by war, pestilence and famine, accompanied by financial difficulties, popular disturbances, repressive measures, and a growth of mutual distrust between rulers and ruled unexampled in the history of our Indian Empire. It is not surprising, therefore, that his speech at the banquet given in his honour at Simla took the form of a defence in which he represented himself as the strong man battling against adverse circumstances and emerging in the end triumphant. Many keen observers have taken another and a very different view, in which less is attributed to the malignity of Providence and more to the weakness or folly of man. It may then be worth while to consider, as Lord Elgin did, these three scourges one by one, to enquire into their origin, and to appraise the various measures taken to mitigate their evil effects.

Starting with the war beyond the frontier, Lord Elgin contents himself with three remarks, two of which he declares to be simple statements of fact. To those who have followed the course of Indian affairs these statements of fact will perhaps be more remarkable for their audacity than their simplicity. The first—and this fact he will be prepared to prove if necessary—is that the frontier wars of last year were unprovoked. Lord Elgin was speaking in the United Service Club, where some three months before Mr. Thorburn, amid thunders of applause, had put forward the very opposite view; and since Mr. Thorburn's speech Colonel Hutchinson, in his account of the Tirah campaign, has declared in the most emphatic manner, and proved alike from the words and the acts of the Afridis, that fear of our policy of aggression was the real cause of the outbreak of the tribes. Colonel Hutchinson expressly says that these outbreaks were not "unprovoked." Lord Elgin says that he is prepared to prove the contrary "if necessary." Surely after the evidence and arguments brought forward by these two authorities, the one an eminent civilian long acquainted with the frontier, the other a soldier who has followed the campaign and enjoyed unexampled opportunities of investigating the causes of the war, it is odd to speak of "simple facts" which can be proved "if necessary." Surely, after the testimony on the other side, if ever the necessity of proof is to arise, it is now. If the war was unprovoked by us, if we are to believe that our occupation and retention of Chitral and the other signs of the "forward" policy had no effect on these tribesmen who prize their freedom so dearly, it is at least incumbent on those who reject this reason to give us another as weighty and as well supported by evidence. Lord Elgin gives us no alternative theory; he offers no evidence against the theory these eminent authorities have put forward so seriously and supported in so much detail. He contents himself with declaring the opposite assertion "a simple fact." In anyone less exalted than a Viceroy this would be called mere bluff. In a person of such position it is difficult to characterise it as it deserves.

The second *fact* is "that the expeditions were successful, and that they fully achieved the objects for which they were sent out"; and this may in the face of Mr. Thorburn's remarks be allowed to be, as his Excellency phrases it, "equally indisputable" with the first. But the third remark, which he honestly admits to be only a statement of his own opinion, is perhaps the most extraordinary of all; for in that he glorifies a war, resulting in so terrible a loss of life and treasure, under the pretext that it will in the end make for peace. For sixteen years the Afridis had faithfully kept their engagements, and we are to be thankful because, after all this waste and bloodshed, "peace has now prevailed for six months." The speaker continues: "The tribes which know now the length of our arm and have felt our power to punish will more readily, under careful and sympathetic management, come to recognise that we have no desire to trample on their rights or encroach on the self-government which they prize, and will be more careful for some time to come how they attack us." "For some time" is encouraging. It was a very considerable time since they last attacked us. But how did they come to think that we desired "to encroach on the self-government which they prize"? Of course Chitral had nothing to do with that, nor the forward policy, for Lord Elgin has already declared that the war was "unprovoked." Was there ever such a series of absurdities? We encroach; we extend our frontier; we occupy Chitral; we stay there after declaring our intention to depart. The Afridis fear our encroachments. Yet we are to believe that this fear was not produced by actions so well fitted to produce it, but arose for no reason; for if it was produced by our action, how can the outbreak of the tribes be spoken of as unprovoked?

If the Viceroy thinks the wars beyond the frontier unprovoked, it is not surprising that he should look on the famine as a visitation of Providence with which man had nothing to do. It is an argument with which Lord George Hamilton has made us very familiar. But what is the real state of the case? Famine is rarely a result of natural causes alone. Bad seasons produce scarcity; but scarcity becomes famine only when the people have no stores of food to fall back upon, and no money wherewith to purchase food from other countries. How is it that famines are so frequent under our beneficent rule? How is it that they are prevented from being worse than all previous famines only by so fine a display of energy and devotion, and so vast an expenditure of money—an expenditure which leaves a terrible debt to the future? Is it through the wickedness of nature ever becoming more malign as our rule becomes more beneficent? Or is it because the soil is exhausted and the peasants are impoverished by the load of taxation and debt—debt incurred in great part to pay taxes, and enforced to such extremities by the legal system we have instituted? Is it because of the constant drain of wealth from India to pay for the luxury of an alien and costly government? Even now, in the midst of his congratulations on the success with which the last famine was met, his Excellency is thinking of the next—famine being now apparently among the established institutions of the country. It is quite in accordance with this that, while we were once promised an enquiry into the causes of famine, Sir J. Lyall's Commission, whose Report we are now awaiting, is only to deal with the secondary question of how famine can best be met. Even Lord Elgin's congratulations, however well they have been deserved by the zealous officials who have thrown themselves so devotedly into the work, give rise to some

reflections. The Government has not published the returns in such a form as to show the full mortality from famine throughout the country; but a careful study of the Blue-books shows that it must have been very great —far greater than the authorities have been willing to allow. If the success has been so magnificent, why do they seem to shirk the truth?

With regard to the plague even Lord Elgin has to admit that so far the success has been very small. He expresses sympathy with the people of Bombay, but in view of the load of debt with which the plague has left them his words may seem but cold comfort:—

> It rejoices me extremely to believe that our Bombay friends have returned to the front, assured not only of the sympathy of the Government of India—of that there could be no doubt—but that we are ready and willing to help to remove their difficulties and to stand shoulder to shoulder with them.

But unless this means that a grant in aid of plague expenditure is about to be made by the central Government it is only adding insult to injury, it is mere verbiage effective only in raising hopes predestined to disappointment. Lord Elgin goes on to say:—

> I think that the people generally are coming to recognise that our wish is to co-operate with them for their own benefit, and that nothing will please us better than to see them voluntarily adopting the precautions most consistent with their customs and habits.

Now this is an excellent policy; but it has not been the policy of his Government until very lately. Those who advocated such views a year ago were stigmatised as obscurantists who opposed the dictates of science, as supporters of superstitions which could not be allowed to stand in the way of the public health, even as inciters to riot and sedition. It is a great thing to have gained such a victory over official prejudices as dangerous as any that have been attributed to the Indians; but the change of front should at least make those charged with the government of India careful how they impute bad motives to their opponents in the future. Even an Indian may know something about India.

As if to point the moral of Lord Elgin's speech—though a different moral from the one intended—a banquet was given in London on the next day in honour of a man whose administration has been in a much truer sense a great success. Sir Antony MacDonnell, the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces, has always been a strenuous supporter of those views to which in one department, that of plague administration, the Government has now reluctantly rallied. In the course of his speech Sir Antony said:—

> To be a successful administrator in India it was absolutely essential to observe two great principles—the first was to firmly uphold law and order, and the next was to maintain a kind and sympathetic attitude towards Native feeling and Native wishes. (Cheers.) The administrator who leans unduly to the first principle would be considered harsh, and the administrator who leans unduly to the second would be considered weak. But it was perfectly possible to reconcile one principle with the other, and he was the best administrator who fully succeeded in reconciling them. Reconciliation would never be effected by him who could find nothing good in Indian customs or Indian modes of thought. The success of British officers—and it had been great, far greater than that of any other colonising Power—was entirely due to the good faith and dexterity with which they codified Native customs and established an administration which, while placing in the forefront her Majesty's Government of law and order, was yet racy of the soil.

And the Lord Chief Justice of England declared:—

> Their guest, Sir A. P. MacDonnell, was an example of the just and wise principle of government which, while maintaining that order without which society went to pieces, yet administered the law with sympathetic regard to the feelings—aye, and the prejudices—of the people ruled.

Mr. Fanshawe, in proposing Lord Elgin's health at Simla, spoke of his "calm courage." It is to be feared that posterity will give a different verdict on an administration marked by reactionary legislation, panic, and so many changes of front. "Amiable weakness" would perhaps be too severe; but it is scarcely possible to avoid a smile when we find the Governor-General saying, "from first to last my colleagues have never failed me." It would be more fitting if his colleagues were to express their thankfulness at being given so amenable a Viceroy. Lord Elgin has always been credited with popular sympathies and excellent intentions; but perhaps after the experience of his government some Indians may prefer a Viceroy who, though his views may be far less in harmony with those of the people of the country, has yet sufficient strength of will to make him the ruler and not the puppet of the high officials at Simla.

PICTURESQUE INDIA.[1]

THE merits and demerits of Sir Richard Temple's new book may be briefly summed up in the one word—sketchy. First of all, it is sketchy in a good and very literal sense, for it is adorned with thirty-two charming illustrations from Sir R. Temple's own water-colour drawings. Their subjects are various indeed—snow-capped peak and jungle, lake and river and plain, cities and temples and palaces; but all are delightful. The author tells us that he has been all his life "a diligent sketcher in water-colour, and of later years in oil also." One wonders how many of the younger generation of Indian administraters sketch so diligently and so well; and whether one secret of the greater strength of character which, we are apt to fancy, our elders must have possessed did not lie in their choice of such recreations. Not long ago the present writer was privileged to see some sketches in water-colours, both vigorous and beautiful, of Indian scenes executed by the late Miss Mary Carpenter, whose philanthropic work is equally famous in India and in England. Probably few of her admirers knew that she was an accomplished artist. It would be difficult to over-estimate the beneficial reaction on a busy life of a study at once so quiet and so engrossing. Sir R. Temple's drawings are very daintily done, and the photographic process used has been very successful in keeping the softness and delicacy of the originals.

To turn to the letterpress, that is "sketchy" also, but unfortunately in the bad sense of the word as well as in the good. It aims at giving a rapid description of the India of to-day, the country, the people, and the Government, for the benefit partly of Britons who stay at home, but more especially of those who contemplate a tour through the great dependency. These, if they have not time for more thorough and elaborate study, ought at least to have some general notion beforehand of the places which, whether from historic interest or natural beauty, are best worth seeing, and to know something of the various nationalities and sects and of the machinery of Government. On the first of these points Sir R. Temple will be found a useful guide. He not only knows India well, but he has an eye for the picturesque, and his judgment as to the places which a traveller whose time is limited must take care to visit is very valuable, and given in a terse, business-like fashion. But the brevity which is admirable in a guide-book leaves the descriptions too slight to be of any great use or interest to the Englishman who has to content himself with reading instead of seeing. And when we pass from the purely descriptive chapters, "A Winter's Tour in India," "A Summer's Sojourn in the Himalaya," "The Forests and the Wild Sports," to the chapters that profess to give an account of the nationalities and religions of India, of the way in which the country is governed and of its progress under British rule, the "sketchiness" is such that they cannot be called adequate either for those who intend to visit India or for those who stay at home. To cover such immense ground satisfactorily in a couple of hundred small pages was of course almost an impossibility; and any fair criticism must take account of the difficulties of the task. On the other hand, that is a defence which ought not to be pressed very far, because an author is presumably free to fix his own limits, and ought not to attempt anything in which he is bound to fail. And Sir R. Temple's "sketchiness" runs a risk of being positively misleading. The briefer his narrative the more carefully he ought to avoid disputable statements. We are told that the famine and plague of 1897 sprang upon India "just at the zenith of her strength, her prosperity, and her splendour" (p. 2); that the famines of India arise "from atmospheric causes of a far-reaching character quite beyond human control" (p. 3); that at Poona "certain persons pretended" that the good work of repressing the plague was "vexatious and oppressive" (p. 5); that the occupation of Chitral is "now found not to be" at the bottom of the frontier rising of 1897 (p. 13); the government of India is "perfectly centralised for general and Imperial purposes, and equally well decentralised for local purposes" (p. 135). Sir R. Temple must know that the truth of all

[1] "A Bird's-Eye View of Picturesque India." By the Right Hon. Sir Richard Temple, Bart., sometime Finance Minister of India, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Governor of Bombay. (London: Chatto and Windus.)

these statements would be disputed both in India and England by men whose judgment is entitled to respect; and it does not seem right, therefore, to make them without attempting to justify them or even giving the reader a hint that they are merely matters of opinion. There is, it is true, a general admission in the preface that some things set forth in the book are "matters of controversy," but in the text itself there is not a note of warning to the guileless reader. In a volume which has had the advantage of previous publication in the form of newspaper articles blemishes of style ought to be less frequent. As early as p. 2 we find the following sentence: "For few years have seen such long and ever lengthening shadows *been cast* (*sic*) right across India from end to end." Apparently the humour of the following is unintentional: "Not long ago a disturbance of this kind in Bombay became so bad that European artillery had to be called in to threaten *to sweep the streets*" (p. 81). On the whole, except pictorially, the book cannot be said to contribute towards "the interpretation of India to England;" but in so far as it may help to interest Englishmen in India, it is perhaps better than nothing at all.

INDIAN FINANCE: A RETROSPECT AND A WARNING.

By an English Onlooker.

II.—The Warning.

THE problem which faces us to-day in India is at bottom more financial than political. The question statesmen have to settle is how to raise (and to spend) the cash.

All the items of receipt in any Indian Budget are primarily divisible into two classes. The first class consists of those items of receipt which go to form the net as distinguished from the gross revenue of the country. In the second class are grouped those items of receipt which form no part of the net revenue, because the profit they yield is balanced by the expenditure necessary to obtain them. (Needless to say, the burden in both cases falls upon the taxpayer.) With respect to the latter class, the Indian Government is in the position of some tradesman who, having purchased bicycles in the hope of saving time and dispensing with labour he had previously employed, should find that the cost of the machines and the outlay necessary for cleaning and repairs entirely absorbed the saving effected by the use of machines. The Indian Government, however, is worse off than our tradesman. Even yet no one is compelled to purchase a bicycle. But no modern government can neglect to provide a postal and telegraphic service. Some money must be advanced for popular education. Every government is under the abiding necessity of maintaining justice, administering the law, and affording protection to life and property by means of police. Assignments under treaties cannot be disregarded without a gross breach of international faith. Interest must be forthcoming upon loans; superannuated officials must have the pensions they have been waiting for; the danger of foreign attack necessitates the equipment of an army and a marine. Yet all these requisites of national well-being in India entail expenditure which is wholly unremunerative.

What then is the basis of the Indian revenue? The answer is prompt and effective. Apart from the receipts from the forest service, the mint, and some minor sources, the net revenue is drawn from land, opium, salt, excise, customs, and stamps.

Of these six sources the land is incomparably the most important. Can we expect an increase here? Over a large part of the most fertile districts the land revenue is permanently settled. That means about one-fifth of the entire amount. If therefore the land is to help us out of our present difficulties, it is to the remaining four-fifths that we must look for aid.

In these other districts, which include the North-West Provinces, the system prevails of reassessing the rents to be paid to the State at the end of every thirty years. But we have it on the highest official authority that these districts are quite unable to bear a heavier strain. This was indubitably true twenty years ago. It is true now. How, indeed, could the position of things in this respect have changed for the better in a country which is depleted by periodic famines, whose inhabitants are dying of a terrible plague, and which has to support the charge not only of foolish frontier expeditions, but also of military operations in Egypt in the success of which it is unconcerned, and from paying for which it ought to have been saved by Section 55 of the Act of 1858?

The case would indeed be different if we could hope that the policy of military aggression would be abandoned. But, with the present Government at Whitehall, there is little prospect of such a change; while famine and plague arise from the combined operation of physical and social causes, some of which we are as powerless to prevent as we are to suspend the law of gravitation, while others plainly take their rise in those errors alike of system and method which tend to the impoverishment of the people.

It may be thought in some quarters that the opium traffic affords room for encouragement. But apart from the very grave moral questions involved—a matter which many regard as conclusive upon the point—the profitableness of the trade depends at all times upon the action of the Chinese Government, who may at any moment stimulate the cultivation of opium at home and exclude the Indian product from their ports. If in the case of land we are met by the certainties of natural law, we are foiled here by the uncertainties of diplomacy.

That the net revenue from salt cannot be increased scarcely demands proof. It is a sure sign that something is wrong in national finance when the tax upon an article of food is so heavy as to check consumption. Yet this limit has long been reached in India. It need scarcely be added that salt is everywhere a main constituent of health, and in the tropics is a vital necessity to the people.

Excise duties may very well be increased in a country of great or growing productiveness. But India is not such a country. She is extremely poor. Then we all know what happens when the cotton duties are discussed in Parliament. The Lancashire spinner, combining a reverence for Cobden with an eye to quick returns, resolutely opposes any increase in duties which would yield a profit to the Bombay mills, and even objects to any such duties existing at all.

Such is the profit side of the account. The four chief branches of expenditure are, of course: (1) military expenditure; (2) cost of administration; (3) loss by exchange; (4) interest on loans.

Can we effect economies under these heads? For clearly the only course open to you when you cannot augment your income is to retrench in your expenditure. But this simple expedient appears to have been too childish for our grave statesmen. The spirit of Rudyard Kipling is still potent in the Foreign Office, and the money spent upon the personal luxury of the ruling caste has shown no signs of diminishing in amount.

The two other items, the loss by exchange and the interest on loans, have a close connexion with one another. Indian loans have again and again been raised in England, and have thus gone to swell the amount of the home charges. The Indian revenue is received in silver, but 45 per cent. of the expenditure has to be defrayed in gold. But the discovery of silver mines, the demonetisation of silver in Germany, and the restriction of the silver coinage by the Latin Union have all contributed to depreciate the value of silver, and therefore to raise the real amount of the home charges. Concurrently with this, of course, the import trade of India has been stimulated at the expense of its export trade. When the export trade diminishes while the import trade increases, the obligations of England to India decrease, the India Council drafts multiply, but fewer of them are wanted for the purpose of avoiding the remittance of specie. The increase in supply and the decrease in demand force down the value of the bills, and render the exchanges unfavourable to India. But even given an expansion of the export trade, still the financial crux can by no means be pulled straight as long as borrowing remains "the normal condition of Indian finance." A new loan means an addition to the Indian home charges, an addition to these involves an increase in the number of bills drawn on India which the Secretary in Council has for sale. An expanding export trade no doubt increases the obligations of England to India, but the larger part of these obligations are satisfied by bills purchased from the Council. Discussions upon this subject often wear an air of paradox because it is not seen that the difficulty lies in the simultaneousness of the two

movements, the expansion of the import trade and the continual addition to the home charges by loans. The partial remission of the Bombay cotton duties was a step entirely in the wrong direction. If protection can anyhow be justified, it is by famine and starvation. One may add that very distinguished financiers think that the duties were not really protective at all, the Lancashire and the Bombay goods being of quite different textures. But waiving that, it should now be clearly seen that one line of deliverance lies in doing what we can to correct the tendency towards the further depreciation of silver. The value of silver, like the value of anything else, depends upon supply and demand. The problem cannot be solved by bimetallic schemes; you must either act upon the desires of those who want silver, or take some such step as the recent closing of the mints. The better plan is, perhaps, always to act on the desires of intelligent human beings, and this can only be done by endeavouring to expand the export trade of India, at the same time ceasing to advance loans on interest. With each increase in the value of the remittances to be made to India, there will be a proportionate increase in the demand for silver, and something will have been done to maintain its stability of value.

In conclusion it may be permitted to sound clearly the note of warning. Unless our Indian Empire is to collapse we must before it is too late adopt the motto of "Peace, retrenchment, and reform." Military aggression must be given up and the idea of a "scientific" frontier abandoned. The policy of the future must be a policy of severe and rigid economy. And it will probably be found that the most important step to this end is to diminish the drain of tribute from India to this country, especially by making more use of Indian capacity in the higher branches of the administration. If England is in the long run to obtain benefit and gain credit from her association with India, it can only be through the prosperity and contentment of the Indian people.

CHRONICLE OF THE WEEK.

THURSDAY, October 13.—Mr. Asquith, addressing a meeting of his constituents at Leven, East Fife, said they found themselves face to face with a situation of exceptional gravity, in the presence of which it was the first duty of patriotic men not to say anything which might even seem to impair the title of the Government to act in the name of a united people. Speaking as a member of Lord Rosebery's Ministry, and as one who set the highest value on the maintenance of cordial relations with France, he said the declarations made by our Ambassador at Paris on the subject of the presence of Major Marchand and his followers at Fashoda had been endorsed by the practically unanimous judgment of the people of this country. He did not, however, refer to Lord Salisbury's revised claim to Fashoda "by right of conquest."

The Paris journals continued an active discussion of the Fashoda question, the more responsible reiterating the hope that the difficulty would be pacifically adjusted but also insisting on the impossibility of the recall of Major Marchand as a preliminary to negotiation. The *Temps*, in reference to Lord Rosebery's speech, trusted that it might be regarded not as the utterance of a statesman, but as the polemics of a party leader. From Paris it was reported that the compensation which France would be willing to accept for the evacuation of Fashoda was a small post on or near the Nile or at the entrance to Bahr-el-Ghazal.

Mr. St. John Brodrick, Under-Secretary for War, was appointed Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, in the place of Lord Curzon of Kedleston, Viceroy-Designate of India.

FRIDAY, October 14.—Mr. Asquith addressed a meeting of his constituents at Tayport, devoting himself chiefly to the discussion of questions of social reform. He advocated the extension of the Workmen's Compensation Act, and the taxation of ground values.

Several Paris journals announced that a military plot had been formed, and that certain generals were to overturn the Cabinet, retain M. Faure as President, and put an end to the attacks on the army, preventing at the same time the revision of the Dreyfus case. It was alleged that the plot was to be carried out to-morrow, and that advantage would be taken of the military reinforcements brought into Paris to restrain the strike. It was added that the Cabinet had been warned, that orders had been given, and that if necessary the Ministry would be able to thwart any such attempt. Correspondents reported that it had been impossible to obtain any clear proofs of the existence of this plot, but that the idea of some act of force haunted some military minds.

The Ambassadors of the four Powers announced to the Porte the decision of their Governments in regard to the Sultan's reply. While adhering strictly to the terms of the ultimatum, the Powers intimated that they might be prepared later to make some concession to the Porte in the matter of maintaining an emblem of Turkish authority in Crete.—The Turkish Governor at Candia had not yet received any official order of withdrawal; but the Turkish officers were selling their furniture and preparing to leave. The Sultan's demand to be allowed to retain a sufficient number of troops to uphold his flag irritated the Cretan Christians. At Canea the Turkish Governor announced that he had been notified by the Sultan that the withdrawal of the Turkish troops was to begin in eight days.—The despatch of French and Russian reinforcements to Crete was announced.

SATURDAY, October 15.—The Paris correspondent of the *Times* expressed the conviction that France could not remain at Fashoda, and that Great Britain could not allow any authority, other than her own or that of the Khedive, to throw itself across the route conquered by her which was to lead from Cairo to the Cape, at the same time pointing out that it would be an irreparable misfortune for France, for England, and for civilisation, if the difference between the two nations were allowed to degenerate into acts of hostility.—Captain Baratier, bringing Major Marchand's despatches from Fashoda, was expected to arrive at Cairo on Wednesday or Thursday.

Ismail Bey communicated to the Admirals at Crete the Sultan's unconditional acceptance of the demand of the Powers for complete evacuation. The leading Beys at Canea had prepared a telegram to the Sultan entreating him, for the sake of their wives and children and what remained of their property, to abandon any idea of opposition to the demands of the Powers. This message, however, the Turkish officials refused to forward. The Mahometan population at Canea and other towns, alarmed at the possibilities of a bombardment, had been leaving the island in large numbers.—No official orders to evacuate had yet been received by the Turkish Governor at Candia.

The wreck of the Atlantic transport liner "Mohegan" on the Manacle Rocks, near the Lizard, last evening, proved to be one of the most serious shipping disasters recorded for some time past. The "Mohegan" left London for New York on Thursday with 96 officers and crew, seven horsekeepers, and 53 passengers. On Friday evening, running at speed in a half-gale of wind, and in clear weather, she struck on the Manacles, and went down in 20 minutes. One boat load of passengers had been got away before she sank, and another was quitting her side, but was carried down with the vessel. Many persons were rescued from the water or the rocks by local lifeboats and tugs, and in all 50 were saved. Very many lives were lost.

MONDAY, October 17.—M. de Lanessan, ex-Governor of Indo-China, in a letter in the Paris *Rappel*, strongly protested against the Anglophobia of a section of his countrymen. For the second time within a few years France was threatened with a war with Great Britain for reasons that did not in any way touch her honour or her security, and it was evident that in order to avoid a stupid war she must make sacrifices that would wound her dignity. He pointed out the material and sentimental considerations which should lead Frenchmen to cultivate the friendship of England. He considered the present situation sufficiently serious to make the public see to what a dangerous point the country had been brought by popularity-hunters who had traded on silly prejudices.—The *Temps* and *Gaulois* argued that territorial and political changes in Equatorial Africa during the past few years had been such as to render negotiations among the European Powers necessary.

At Candia, Canea, and Retimo quiet generally prevailed. Preparations for the departure of the Turkish troops continued, and the exodus of Mahometans from the island was increasing. The Turkish authorities notified the Admirals that the evacuation would begin before Thursday.

The number of bodies recovered from the wreck of the "Mohegan" up to to-night was 34—12 of passengers and 22 of the crew. As 50 of the passengers and crew had been saved, 72 of the 156 persons on board had still to be accounted for. The reason why the vessel should have been steered on such a course as to put her on the Manacle Rocks was still quite inexplicable. It had been ascertained that there was no derangement of the machinery and that the weather was clear, though the evening was dark.—The inquest on the bodies thus far recovered was formally opened at St. Keverne's this afternoon, but adjourned after evidence of identification had been taken.

TUESDAY, October 18th.—The Duke of Devonshire, addressing a meeting of Liberal Unionists in Glasgow, referred at some length to the past history of the Unionist party, and dwelt on the "satisfactory change" in the direction of political interests that had followed the last election. Turning to external affairs, he entered into detail with regard to the West African negotiations with France, and said that, although they were not yet embodied in a treaty, there was every prospect that they would be by the end of the year. As to China, the Government would take care that British rights were respected there. He would not say that there was anything absolutely incompatible in the two policies of an "open door" and

spheres of influence. After dwelling on what he called the brilliancy of the recent success in the Sudan, the duke said he could not believe that that success was going to lead England into any dispute with France over the question of Fashoda. The full disclosures which had been made upon this subject had come as a relief to the public mind, and it was satisfactory to everyone to know that the rights which the British Government claimed in that region were not going to be frittered away by negotiations, however ably conducted.

Mr. Courtney, addressing his constituents at Bodmin, devoted his remarks chiefly to the Fashoda question. He deplored the reconquest of the Sudan, which was worthless to Egypt and a burden to this country. The advance up the Nile had brought us to the risk of a war with France, although the danger, he hoped, was now past. About Fashoda he thought England in the main was right, and that M. Marchand ought to have removed the French flag; but the question was one that ought not to be referred to force without debate. On the broad ground of effective occupation we had the better position, and he sincerely hoped that M. Marchand's report would induce the French Government to accept that position; but he protested against a resort to force before exhausting every possible means of pacific settlement.

The French Africa Committee published an account of Major Marchand's mission which plainly showed Fashoda to have been his aim from the outset. M. Liotard was to-day received by the committee and warmly congratulated on his own and Major Marchand's success in the basin of the Bahr-el-Ghazal.—The St. Petersburg *Novoe Vremya*, discussing French complaints of the want of support from Russia in the Fashoda difficulty, said the obligations laid on Russia by her alliance with France did not include the necessity of assisting such a Ministry as that of M. Brisson out of its difficulties.

The first sentence of the British Court-martial at Candia was carried out to-day, when seven culprits, convicted of the murder of two privates of the Highland Light Infantry and of invalids in the British hospital, were hanged on the highest bastion of the town. The Turkish Governor entered a protest, desiring to refer the matter to Constantinople, but the British authorities declined to defer the execution. The impression created on the populace by the carrying out of the sentence was said to be tremendous. Nobody stirred from the town during the day and it looked deserted. It was discovered through Turkish soldiers that before the Sultan assented to evacuation a general pillage and massacre were contemplated.

The German Emperor and Empress arrived at Constantinople and were received at the landing-stage by the Sultan, who was attended by a brilliant suite. The whole party, after the ceremony of the reception, proceeded to Yildiz. The Berlin *Post* meantime eulogised Abdul Hamid in terms which would have been rather flattering of an archangel.

Wednesday, October 19.—Sir M. Hicks Beach, addressing a great Unionist meeting at North Shields, said it seemed to him impossible that the French could maintain that they had political rights at Fashoda. He declined to believe, until the contrary was shown, that the French Government could take any other course than that which the British Government desired. But if that view was not adopted the matter would assume as grave an aspect as it was possible for any matter to take between two great countries. He hoped and trusted and believed that this question was capable of a friendly and amicable solution. But this country had put its foot down, and if, unhappily, another view should be taken elsewhere, the Ministers of the Queen knew what their duty demanded, and they believed that, in this matter, they had the country at their backs. Whereupon the populace cheered.

It was stated from Paris that Captain Baratier, the bearer of Major Marchand's report, was not expected to reach Cairo until Thursday evening. A report was current that the text of the report would not be telegraphed from Cairo to the French Government; but would be brought on to Paris by Captain Baratier.

The Sultan gave a *gala* dinner at Yildiz Kiosk, on Tuesday evening, in honour of the German Emperor and Empress, the other guests including several German officers in the Turkish service. The Palace was brilliantly illuminated, and a display of fireworks ended with the words, "Long live the German Emperor."

M. Peytral, the French Finance Minister, had drawn up a scheme for a progressive income-tax. The income of a taxpayer would be calculated on the rental value of his dwelling, the number of servants he kept, the carriages or motor cars he drove, and would vary in Paris and the different parts of France. A reduction of taxation was to be made according to the number of children a person had living.

From Canea it was stated that the Turkish troops were embarking at Suda on Ottoman warships and transports. The Admirals had informed their Governments that, on the departure of the Turkish authorities on November 4, they would assume the provisional government of the island.

At the suggestion of the British Ambassador, the Emperor of China was examined by a doctor attached to the French Legation. According to the doctor's report, his Majesty was in a weak and anæmic condition, and in need of constant care, though there was no immediate danger.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

"A LIBEL ON OFFICIAL INDIANS."

To the Editor of "India."

Sir,—As a regular reader of India, I have been deeply interested in its recent articles concerning one-sided animadversions on Native gentlemen in British Government service Questions I would like to ask are as follows: Is our Government in the East itself particularly careful to uphold the honesty of its servants of any race? Does it insist on the keeping of its own rules and regulations? Or does it consent to deviations and lapses which make its service more profitable to rogues than to honest men, and which must eventually lead honest men to avoid it?

A case of which I have recently had experience has raised these points in my own mind. A young student in this country, native of an Eastern island which is one of the most prized possessions of the British crown, got his private affairs into difficulties, and fled secretly, not being heard of for many months afterwards. In sundry circumstances arising out of his flight it became necessary that the papers he had left behind should be explored. It then came to light that his father, high in the medical service of the Crown colony, had been in the habit of directing his son to apply his "family remittance" to the payment of other people's debts in this country, and not only this, but also of directing him to accumulate the monthly instalments and return them to the Crown colony, thereby gaining the benefit of the heavy exchange.

The "debts" to be thus paid out of the family remittance allowed for the maintenance and education of remitter's son were debts previously contracted in Britain by other natives of the Crown colony, and also in its medical service, but no longer having rights to family remittances of their own.

The sums to be returned to the Crown colony seem to have sometimes amounted to about £20, which would therefore arrive as about £33 or £35. Instructions were that they were not to be returned direct to the remitter, the student's father, but were to be sent to a female relative of his wife's, bearing another name and living in another part of the island.

The matter was duly brought under the notice of the present Governor of the island, full copies of documents proving the facts being furnished to him.

On June 11 this year the Governor's secretary replied as follows:—

"I am directed by H.E. the Governor to return the accompanying correspondence, and to inform you that he does not consider this a matter for the intervention of the Governor. He hopes that everything will be satisfactorily arranged."

In reply to this a letter (dated July 7) was addressed to the Governor, in which the writer, after recapitulating the facts of the case, remarked:—

"Though I am ready to submit that it may be no part of Government duty to see that individuals are not defrauded by its accredited servants, yet surely it must be a function of Government to see that its servants are not defrauding itself. I fear that the correspondence I sent your Excellency, and your answer now conveyed through your private secretary, *together* form a precedent justifying the perversion of family remittances as 'not being a matter for the intervention of the Governor.'"

Of this letter no notice has been taken.

All the documents in this matter are now in my possession. and copies of them are furnished to you with this letter.

Yours, etc.,

I. Fyvie Mayo.

THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

ABSENCE OF RESPONSIBILITY, AND ITS RESULTS.

IMPORTANT SPEECH BY MR. W. C. BONNERJEE.

[From Our Own Reporter.]

Accepting the kindly proffered hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Bonnerjee, the members of the Croydon branch of the Women's National Liberal Federation assembled on Wednesday evening at "Kidderpore," Bedford Park, Croydon, to hear an address by Mr. Bonnerjee on the question, "Is the Government of India Responsible, and, if so, to Whom?" Dr. Aubrey presided, and among those present were Mr. and Mrs. Grimwade, Mr. and Mrs. de Layen, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Moore, Mr. Romesh Dutt, C.I.E., Mr. Wybroo, Professor Murison, Mrs. and Miss Aubrey, Mrs. Hingston, Mrs. Mason, and Mrs. Brazier. The drawing-room was well filled.

The Chairman, in opening the proceedings, quoted statistics showing the magnitude of our interests in India, financial and otherwise. He pointed out how in regard to taxation there was a total absence of the principle so dear to Liberals, that taxation and representation should go together, and in view of the increasing numbers of Indians who, thanks to the progress of education, were occupying high positions in medicine, law, science, and commerce, he insisted that it was only reasonable that there should be a readjustment of those old conditions which obtained when Englishmen simply looked upon their

Eastern Empire as conquered territory. We had responsibilities towards India which we could not evade, and must take our share either of praise or of odium for whatever might be the condition of that dependency. (Cheers.)

Mr. Bonnerjee, who was received with loud cheers, then delivered his address. He said:—I make no apology for introducing to your notice, or asking your consideration of, the subject which has been selected for the meeting this evening. That subject is, as you are aware, "Is the Government of India responsible to any one?" and I will add to that "if so, to whom?" Apart from the importance of the subject itself, it has, or rather it ought to have, a very peculiar importance for the people of Great Britain, as India for weal or woe is bound up with Great Britain, and there is hardly a household in England that has not some connexion in India, in many of the services which are recruited from this country. Again money belonging to the people of England is invested in India, so that everybody is more or less connected with that country. (Hear, hear.) There is one other preliminary point to which I wish to direct your attention, and that is the axiomatic truth that the Government of a country must be responsible to either the people of that country, or at any rate to somebody who has the supreme command over that country. Whatever may be the case with the Autocrat of all the Russias, whether he be responsible to his people or not, in this country it has been accepted from probably very ancient times that no government is fit to be placed over the people which does not owe responsibility to the people. (Hear, hear.)

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT.

The subject chosen, therefore, for your consideration to-night is also of very great importance from this point of view, and, bearing these two things in mind, I will now proceed to place before you as shortly as I can the constitution of the Government of India, and I will ask your attention first to the question, Is the Government of India responsible to anybody? You are to bear in mind that the supreme ruler of India is nominally her Majesty the Queen, while really it is the Secretary of State for India. Next to him in importance comes the Governor-General of India, who with his Council has the oversight of all the subordinate governments of India, and is responsible to the Secretary of State for what takes place in that country. The governments that are engaged in looking after the affairs of India may be said to be six—you have the Governorships of Bombay and Madras, and the Lieut.-Governorships of Bengal, the North-Western Provinces, the Punjab and British Burma. And in addition to these, but not of quite so much importance, are the Chief Commissionerships of the Central Provinces and of Assam, which it is not necessary that I should trouble you with at the present moment. It is quite clear that the subordinate Governments in India are all responsible to the Governor-General in Council, and he in turn is responsible to the Secretary of State. It is unnecessary for me to go into the internal government of India so far as the subordinate Governorships and Commissionerships are concerned. There are various divisions in the Presidencies and Provinces which are ruled by chiefs, who are responsible to the heads of the subordinate Governments. I want, however, to leave all that for the present and to come to the question as to whether the Government of India is responsible to anybody. In the time of the East India Company, as you probably are aware, the method of government was this:—The Governor-General initiated measures upon the recommendation of the different subordinate governments for the government of their respective provinces. Those measures were subject to approval or disapproval by the Court of Directors of the East India Company; if that body approved, then the Court of Proprietors had to give its sanction or otherwise, and finally the approval had to be obtained of the Board of Control, which was connected with the Ministry of the day. Thus there were three safeguards with reference to any policy adopted in those days for the government of the country, viz., first that of the Court of Directors, then that of the Court of Proprietors, and finally the Board of Control; and either of those bodies could disapprove any measures put forward by the Governor-General. And I must say that in these days, reading the reports of the proceedings before the Court of Directors, the Board of Proprietors, and the Board of Control, it is impossible to come to the conclusion that the affairs of India were not considered from the point of view of the good of the Indian people. (Hear, hear.) However much the East India Company may have erred in their desire to get as much money out of India as possible, the people of India were well looked after and their interests were considered solely with the view of their being properly governed. (Hear, hear.) At any rate this was the case when the East India Company, under the Acts of the British Parliament, ceased to be a trading company and became really a governing, or in other words an Imperial company. After the Mutiny of 1857-8 the Company were abolished, and we have in their place not the threefold control over the Government of India, but the single control of the Secretary of State and his Council. There are many things in which the Secretary of State is supreme and can overrule his Council when he likes, and there are one or two measures in which he is bound to act upon the opinion of his councillors. But these are minor points and it is not necessary now to deal with them.

NO RESPONSIBILITY TO THE INDIAN PEOPLE.

To whom is the Government of India responsible? It is certainly—and when I say certainly I mean avowedly—not responsible to the people of the country. Sir John (afterwards Lord) Lawrence, than whom there was no more sympathetic Governor-General of India in recent times, said on one occasion: "In doing the best we can for the people of India, we are bound by our conscience and not by theirs." This shows clearly and distinctly that the responsibility for the government of India was not to the people of India. And it was only the other day that Sir Antony P. MacDonnell, the present Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, who is about to return to India, said in answer to the toast of his health, at a dinner which was given to him by his old friends at the Hotel Métropole—"To be a successful administrator in India it was absolutely necessary to observe two great principles—the first was to firmly uphold law and order, and the next was to maintain a kind and sympathetic attitude towards Native feeling and Native wishes." I may have to come back to this statement later on, but I want you particularly to note that the second principle is only to *maintain* a kind and sympathetic attitude towards Native feeling and wishes, and that it is not to be *governed* by Native feeling and wishes—that is to say that the administration is not to be governed by anything the Natives may say, but it is to be governed, as Sir John Lawrence put it, "by our consciences and not by theirs." This is not only avowed by words, but it is apparent every day in practice in India. You may be aware that the Governor-General of India has two councils—the Executive and the Legislative. To the former no Native has ever been admitted—that is a territory which is closed by iron doors to the Natives of India. To the Legislative Council of the Governor-General of India as well as to those of the different subordinate governments the natives of India are admitted, but they are only allowed the privilege of submitting questions which may or may not be put and answered at the discretion of the ruler of the Province or of the Governor-General. In these Councils the budgets of the different presidencies, and in the Governor-General's Legislative Council the Budget for the whole of India, are submitted to the members, who are allowed to criticise them, but have no power whatever to propose resolutions disapproving of any particular item. Native members can merely speak on the budget and they are answered by the financial member of the Governor-General's Council. And I may here add for your information that these criticisms of the budget are mere beating the air, for according to the rules laid down for the conduct of business, the junior member has to speak first, and so on in gradation. The Native members are generally the junior members; they hold the position for only two years at a time, and if re-appointed they have to go back to the end of the seat. (Laughter.) The result is that the financial member of the Viceroy's Executive Council has the last word, and of course a man trained in the Indian service, who knows full well how to carry the gallery with him, finds it easy to make out that the Native member criticising the budget is a nincompoop, and that his words ought not to be attended to. Never has there been a debate in the Council of the Governor-General of India or in any of the legislative councils of the subordinate governments where any criticism by Native members has received even sympathetic treatment. ("Shame.") Therefore I think I am not wrong in asserting—as I do most positively—that the Government of India owes no responsibility to the people of India.

THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND PARLIAMENT.

It would not be so very bad if the Government of India owed some responsibility to somebody else who might be in a position to bring it to its right senses if it should happen to go wrong. But the only body to whom the Government of India may be said to be responsible is the House of Commons, and through that House to the British public. There is, on paper, a very good constitution for the Government of India, so far as its responsibility to Parliament is concerned, because you may be in the House of Commons debates on Indian subjects, and where the Government of India has gone wrong you may by means of those debates bring them to their right senses. But is there in reality any responsibility on the part of the Government of India to the House of Commons, or through the House to the English public? Let us consider this from the point of view of the Indian Budget that must be presented to the Houses of Parliament under the Acts which regulate at present the Government of India. I will read to you from a book by Sir Courtenay Ilbert on the Government of India, in which he sets forth the wording of the statutes which provide:—

"(1) The Secretary of State in Council must within the first fourteen days during which Parliament is sitting next after the first day of May in every year lay before both Houses of Parliament:—1st, An account for the financial year preceding that last completed of the annual produce of the revenues of British India, distinguishing the same under the respective heads thereof, and each of the several provinces, and of all the annual receipts and disbursements at home and abroad for the purposes of the Government of India, distinguishing the same under the respective heads thereof.

"(2) The latest estimates of the same for the last financial year.

"(3) The amount of the debts chargeable on the revenues of India, with the rates of interest they respectively carry and the annual amount of the interest.

"(4) An account of the State effects and credit in each province and in England or elsewhere applicable to the purposes of the Government of India according to the latest advices which have been received thereof.

"(5) A list of the establishment of the Secretary of State in Council and the salaries and allowances payable in respect thereof.

"If any new or increased salary or pension of £50 a year or upwards has been granted or created within any year in respect of the said establishment, the particulars thereof must be specially stated and explained at the foot of the account for that year.

"The account must be accompanied by statements prepared from the detached reports from each province in British India in such form as best exhibits the moral and material progress and condition of British India in each of the said provinces."

Now, that is what the Government of India have to do. They have within the first 15 days of May to submit to the British Parliament a statement of Indian Accounts. But what is done in practice? So far from the accounts of the Government of India being presented to Parliament within the first fifteen days of May, they are never presented until about two days before the Prorogation—about the 6th or 7th of August in each year. And at the time they are presented and when the Secretary of State makes his Financial Statement to the House of Commons most of the members have departed, and most of those who remain have only done so because it is necessary that there should be forty members to make a quorum. They do not remain in order to consider the accounts of India. In this connexion may I relate to you an experience I had some years ago in the House of

Commons on what is called the Indian Budget night. I went there expecting to see a good many members present taking an active interest, not merely in the accounts, but also in the welfare of the people of India. When Sir John Gorst, who was at that time Under-Secretary, rose to make his statement, the House contained about thirty members, while, when my friend Mr. Bradlaugh spoke, his fame brought in perhaps about twenty more. Then Sir Roper Lethbridge got up to speak. He had been in the Government service in India, and had been rewarded with a knighthood of one of the Indian Orders for the good work he had done there. Yet while he was speaking there were only two members in the House—the Chairman of Committees and Sir Roper himself. But supposing that the whole of the members of the House were to be present while the Indian Budget is debated, what power have they over it? The House has no power to object to or to cancel one single item of the expenditure that has been incurred in India by the Government of India. All it does is to pass a resolution after a cursory debate on matters connected with India. I will give you the text of the last resolution passed :—

"Resolved—That it appears, by the Accounts laid before this House, that the total revenue of India for the year ending March 31, 1897, was Rx. 94,129,741; that the total expenditure in India and in England charged against the revenue was Rx. 95,834,763; that there was an excess of expenditure over revenue of Rx. 1,705,022; and that the capital outlay on railways and irrigation works not charged against revenue was Rx. 4,984,422."

That is the sort of resolution which the House of Commons passes every year in connexion with the accounts of India. It means simply that the accounts which have been presented show certain results; but there is not one word of criticism as to whether the accounts are correct, or as to whether the expenditure has been properly incurred, or as to the policy which has been pursued by the Government of India. In fact the House of Commons has no control over the accounts of India in the slightest degree. It of course could pass a resolution that the Government of India has not done its duty and asking the Queen to remove the Secretary of State for India from his office; but it has never done that as yet, and members have never taken sufficient interest in the good government of India to induce them to look carefully into the policy of the Government and to arrive at an impartial opinion as to whether or not it had done its duty towards the people of India.

INDIFFERENCE OF THE CONSTITUENCIES.

Now of course the great incentive to members of the House of Commons to do anything comes from the constituencies. If there is any subject in which the constituencies take a great deal of interest, members are moved to action by those whom they represent, with sometimes the result that the Government of the day is discredited. But where is there any interest in the constituencies with regard to India? Unless there is an upheaval such as occurred in 1857-58, in which English lives were lost, the constituencies are perfectly content to leave India in the hands of those irresponsible persons who now have control to do precisely as they like with her. One reason for the prevalence of this state of feeling in the constituencies appears to me to be this. There is a general belief on the part of the English people that they have to pay money out of their pockets for the Government of India—that they have to pay taxes for the preservation of the connexion between England and India; and they think that if they interfere at all with the action of the Government of India they may have perhaps to pay more. Never was there a greater delusion in the minds of anybody. So far from having paid one single sixpence for the government of India, the English people have derived the largest possible benefits for the money which has been remitted to them from India. Not one single sixpence has England ever spent towards the acquisition of India or towards her maintenance. As we say in our country, there are certain kinds of fish which you can fry in their own oil. The position of the Government of India is exactly described by that. You have got India at the expense of India, and you have never had to pay a single sixpence out of your pockets for it. Would you believe it, that even that vast palace which the Secretary of State possesses in England—the India Office—was built entirely with money that came from India and derived from the taxes paid by the people of India? The salaries of the Secretary of State for India, of his councillors, and his clerks, and even of the office charwoman are paid out of the revenues received from and collected in India. And again, a vast amount of money for the training of young soldiers who are sent for a time to India is paid out of the revenues of that country. Therefore I say that at no time, and under no circumstances, have the people of this country contributed one single sixpence towards the acquisition or the maintenance of India. But this delusion on their part that they are taxed for the preservation of the connexion with India has been, I am sorry to say, to a very considerable extent at the bottom of the indifference which the people of this country have displayed towards India. (Hear.) Having shown to you that the Government of India owes no responsibility to the people of India and that it does not in point of fact and practice owe any responsibility to the people of this country, it follows that the Government of India is an irresponsible body.

DISASTROUS RESULTS OF IRRESPONSIBILITY.

I think I should be within the mark in saying that this irresponsibility has been productive of the most disastrous results to India. It is in the opinion of the people of India an eternal disgrace to the people of England that it should be so, seeing that they are the only people who get money out of the Government of India. (Hear, hear.) After all, when you come to look at it from a practical point of view, the men you send from this country to govern India are merely your agents. When an agent does not do his duty properly, or when he does it so as to produce discontent in the minds of the people whom you send him to govern, the disgrace is not the disgrace of the people governed, it is the disgrace of the principals in the transaction. It is the disgrace of those who send out the agents. What are the disastrous consequences to which I have referred?

WARS BEYOND THE FRONTIER.

First and foremost, of late years you have had perpetual wars beyond the North-West frontier of India. Nobody I have spoken to in this country, whether in the public service or out of it—except military men—approves of these frontier wars, or of the so-called "scientific" frontier which Lord Beaconsfield wanted to fix as a shield against Russia. So far as India is concerned, everybody is opposed to it except a small clique of military men who somehow have managed to get hold of the ear of the Governor-General for the time being. The Governor-General in these matters is astute enough in the first instance to obtain the sanction of the Secretary of State for what he is going to do, and the moment he has got the sanction away go the troops to find out this "scientific" frontier. In this research for a "scientific" frontier we get some very hard knocks and many valuable lives are lost. But what is that to the military clique? They do not themselves go to the front. They do not get knocked on the head; but after the triumphant success of our arms all the decorations, except the V.C., which can only be won on the field of battle—all the other decorations—the K.C.S.I.'s and the G.C.S.I.'s come flying like leaves in the autumn on their heads. (Laughter.) Of course that is their great consideration—to get hold of the Governor-General and make him a convert to "scientific" frontier policy. The amount of money that is wasted on these wars is enormous, and you would scarcely believe me were I to mention the amount. But you can easily imagine that you cannot have a regular army of 60,000 men, with all the arms of precision, engaged in fighting with people who are fond of guerilla warfare without having to spend a very large amount of money. What is the result? Taxation in India has gone up to a point which is almost unbearable, while the money thus obtained passes, as Sir Charles Aitchison in his short life of Sir John Lawrence says, "through the sieve of the military department." Every domestic reform is put in the back-ground. If you say that so much money is needed for the Education Department in order to give proper education to the people, the answer is, "There is no money." If you want sanitary reform in order to keep the plague out of the Indian boundaries the answer is the same. If famine is to be battled with, well, you must raise a subscription in Great Britain—there is no money in the Indian exchequer for the purpose of lifting the people out of their difficulties. There is no money for anything of that kind; but there is money for these frontier wars. ("Shame.") I venture to think that if the Government of India had been responsible to anybody those frontier wars would never have been undertaken, and the old policy of Sir John Lawrence of remaining within our boundaries and taking care of our own provinces from those boundaries would be adhered to. (Cheers.) You never hear a responsible politician say that these frontier wars are necessary. All that is said is that they are forced upon us. You have on your frontiers wild tribes, and close to them you have soldiers and officers dying of *ennui* because they have nothing to do. Suddenly a cry is raised of a raid on the part of these frontier tribes; it is declared that it must be checked and punished; in doing that your troops go about ten miles forward and establish themselves there until another raid calls for a further advance. ("Shame.") There is no limit to your going forward, and as I have said, an enormous part of the revenues of India is spent on these wars. The money goes through the sieve, as Sir Charles Aitchison says, of the military department. (Hear, hear.) Whatever the people of India may be I take it that they are not fools —(hear, and laughter)—and they resent this policy. (Cheers.) They know that of themselves they are perfectly powerless, they cannot do anything, but they grunt and are dissatisfied and will not pay that divine honour to their rulers which they think is their due. They are consequently deemed seditious. The Government do not for a moment consider that it is a reflection upon their own wisdom and policy for the people, after a century of English rule, to be seditious. They merely think that because the people grunt and grumble they are seditious and must be repressed. I will tell you what sedition means to the Government of India. It means that you must not speak disparagingly of their measures: if you have any criticism to offer, it must be one of pure and unadulterated laudation. (Laughter.) You have no right to say that they are not archangels; that they are not invested and endowed with all the greatest qualities of the best statesmen ever produced in any country. (Laughter.) If you dare to suggest that, then you are seditious, and if a man talks such a thing or writes it in a newspaper, then his heart is bad: he is seditious and ought to be punished. They forget that trust begets trust, and that if you treat a person with distrust he is sure to return the compliment by treating you with distrust. When the government of India was in the hands of the East India Company we never heard of these seditious speakers or writers, because at the time we had somebody in England who was able to take a just view of these subjects. At the present moment we have nobody to do it. The officials in India are astute enough to get the sanction of the Secretary of State for what they intend to do, and having got that sanction they go on their way regardless of the feelings and opinions of the people who, when they appeal to the Secretary of State, get a slap on the cheek because he says that the measures which have been taken by the Government are perfectly fair, just, and proper, and he upholds that Government in everything. Yet these measures which he describes as perfectly fair, just, and proper, are the very ones to which in their inception he had pledged himself. There has not been, I am sorry to say, any Secretary of State for India—with two honourable exceptions—who has ever been strong enough to confess that the policy which had been sanctioned was not for the best in every way. The two exceptions were Sir Charles Wood, afterwards Viscount Halifax (a Liberal), and Sir Stafford Northcote, afterwards the Earl of Iddesleigh (a Conservative). With these two exceptions we have never had a Secretary of State strong enough to confess that what he had sanctioned was wrong and must be remedied. We have had weak men who, having once sanctioned a particular policy, have adhered to that policy, have become partisans of it, and have defended it through thick and thin. Aye, they have successfully defended it, because, as you know, the Secretary of State is a member of the Administration of the day—he is a member of the Cabinet and has a majority behind his back in the House of

Commons. He is able to say to those who complain, "The House of Commons approves what I have done; I am triumphantly vindicated. What are you grumbling about? You ought not to grumble, and if you do you are seditious."

REPRESSIVE LEGISLATION.

That brings me to the repressive legislation which, as I say, owing to this want of responsibility on the part of the Indian Government, has recently been passed in India. As a matter of fact the Sedition Bill which was passed into law was drafted in this country. What I am about to say upon this matter is taken from the Blue-book. The Bill was drafted under the orders of the Secretary of State; the draft was approved by him, and it was sent out to India to be passed into law. The Governor-General of India meekly objected to it; he said in effect, as I understand him, that the existing law of the country was perfectly good and safe, and that there was no necessity to revise it at all, particularly as two High Courts in India had given an interpretation which the Government of India considered was sufficient for all practical purposes. However the Secretary of State—Lord George Hamilton—insisted that his draft Bill should be passed, and it was passed accordingly, with some slight modifications. Now there was no one in the country among the non-official Europeans who, taking an impartial view, did not object to this Bill, while the whole of the Native population from the most orthodox to the most heterodox, from the most Conservative to the most Radical, objected to it. On their behalf representations were made to the House of Commons; questions were put to the Secretary of State, and what do you think Lord George Hamilton did? On February 17 last, in reply to Sir William Wedderburn, Lord George Hamilton stated that if the new measures were passed into law the power of allowing or disallowing them was vested in the Crown, and that he was in no sense disposed to shirk responsibility for any advice which he might give to her Majesty on the subject. On the same evening, replying to Mr. Herbert Roberts's amendment to the address, Lord George Hamilton deprecated discussion at that period because, as he said, the measures were then under the consideration of the Legislative Council, and it would be improper to influence and perhaps prejudice the result. He added that when the opinions expressed in the Legislative Council came to the India Office, if it was desired that they should be published he would at once publish them, and that that would form "a legitimate and proper opportunity for discussing the matter." Similarly, a week later, on February 24, Lord George Hamilton stated, in reply to Mr. Pickersgill, that if the Viceroy gave his assent to the new law it would "still be within the power of the Crown to disallow either or both measures." Now what to a candid mind would be the impression conveyed by Lord George Hamilton's language as used in the House of Commons? Would it not be this, that the noble lord would consider the question on its merits and come to an impartial conclusion with regard to it? We in India certainly took this view of the Secretary of State's language. Having heard what is contained in the Blue-book, and comparing it with what Lord George Hamilton said to the House of Commons, what conclusion can you come to? We Indians are an Eastern people, supposed to be uncivilised, and to my Eastern uncivilised mind the only language by which Lord George Hamilton's conduct can be characterised is that it was an organised hypocrisy from beginning to end. (Cheers.) He is the man who forces the Government of India to go on with this Bill and to pass it at any hazard, notwithstanding the objections raised to it not only by the people of India but by the bulk of the Anglo-Indian community. The Government of India objected to it, but Lord G. Hamilton forced it through; and then he conveyed to the world the impression that he was about to consider the Bill on its merits, and that an opportunity for useful discussion in Parliament would subsequently arise. The effect of his statements was to put the House of Commons off its guard, and as to the statement that the House would have a later opportunity of discussing the matter, he took no steps to provide such an opportunity, so that the matter did not come on until two days before the Prorogation. Then Mr. Herbert Roberts brought forward his question, and then Lord George Hamilton had the hardihood to say that the only people who objected to the Bill were certain disaffected people of the so-called educated classes, but that the bulk of the population and the leading men of the country had taken no objection to the measure at all! I may say that if Lord George Hamilton had kept himself well-informed of what takes place in India he would have known that that was contrary to the facts. (Hear.) Of course the people do not like this sort of thing, and they express their opinions somewhat warmly perhaps. The expression of that opinion is put down as sedition. But the fact remains that you now have repressive laws with regard to sedition such as to produce what at the present time I do not hesitate to say amounts to a reign of terror in India both on the part of those who speak in public and on the part of those who write in the newspaper press. ("Shame.") Indeed, if what I am now saying to you could be construed by any means as sedition, I could be prosecuted under this law when I go back to India, and I could be put in gaol. But, luckily, I have been able to repress my feelings so far as not to give vent to anything that might be called seditious. (Hear and laughter.)

IMPRISONMENT WITHOUT TRIAL.

Take another instance, which shows the evil arising from irresponsibility on the part of the Government of India. You may have heard that shortly after that most lamentable event—lamentable from every point of view—(hear, hear)—the murder of Mr. Rand and Lieutenant Ayerst at Poona, the Government of Bombay was in a great panic, and two gentlemen named Natu—two brothers—were arrested under an obsolete statute and put into gaol. They remained in prison for nearly nine months without trial, and at last, after a great deal of entreaty on the part of various influential men in this country, they have been allowed to leave the gaol. But they are on parole, and are not able to move about without the sanction of the Government of Bombay. Now Lord George Hamilton, on the subject of these Sirdars Natu, made statements in the House of Commons to which I shall have to draw your attention later on, if I am not wearying you. But for my present purpose I will say that the man who was arrested and confessed that he had murdered these two officials declared that he had no particular animosity against them, but that they had said something with which he did not agree, and he consequently took the law into his own hands. Nobody put him up to it, and he did what he did entirely off his own bat. It is important to note that the judge who tried him subsequently made a speech in which he avowed publicly that having considered the evidence against this man with the utmost care, he was perfectly satisfied that there was nobody at his back, and he only and alone was responsible for these murders. But what did Lord George Hamilton say? He said: "In Poona unfortunately there is a clique of some of the descendants of those who, at the commencement of this century, controlled a considerable portion of India. They have ever been hostile to British rule, and they have never lost any opportunity of stirring up discontent and disaffection against the authorities. They promptly availed themselves of this occasion, and by gross and wilful distortion of the acts of the officers of the search party employed at Poona, they contrived to produce the feeling which resulted in the murder of Mr. Rand and Lieutenant Ayerst. Both these officers were done to death by the spread of wilful and malicious falsehoods." To say the least of it, it was exceedingly improper for the Secretary of State to say that in Poona "there was a clique of some of the descendants of those who at the commencement of this century controlled a considerable portion of India." He was of course referring to the brothers Natu, and when I tell you as a historical fact that the grandfather of these brothers was the principal adviser and the principal supporter of the English when they made war upon the Peshwa, with the result that Poona was obtained for this country, and that for his good deeds, in which he was assisted by his sons, the Government of the East India Company made him large grants, and that these two brothers are the direct descendants of these men, and their interests are entirely bound up with the permanence of British rule in India, you can understand how much truth there is in this statement on the part of Lord George Hamilton. So far from being disaffected to the Government of India, so far from attempting to stir up disturbance in the country, these two brothers, and particularly the elder one, had done all in their power to help the Government in everything and to make them popular with the people. And in connexion with the plague regulations the older brother had been the foremost to tell them what to do and to bring to the notice of the Government defaults on the part of the officers employed to carry out the regulations. If Lord George Hamilton had not been misled—and it is to be hoped as a matter of charity that he was misled—the only conclusion one can arrive at is that he deliberately said things he knew to be untrue for the purpose of throwing dust into the eyes of members of the House of Commons. I have here another extract from the speech which he delivered on August 5, 1897. He said: "A certain knot of persons in Poona set themselves to malign Mr. Rand and his coadjutors. The murders were perpetrated, and they were cold-blooded murders carefully thought out and deliberately planned. They were not the deeds of a fanatic smarting under the sense of some supposed wrong—under a belief, for example, that some outrage had been done to his family. Everybody, he thought, would admit that the persons who committed these crimes ought to be brought to justice. He believed that if anyone of the members from Ireland who had spoken had been in the position of the Governor of Bombay he would have acted in the same way, and would have relegated the British constitution to the place to which it properly belonged—(laughter)—he meant to that House." What is the meaning of that? That these murders had been deliberately planned and carried out; whereas we know as a matter of fact that they were not only not deliberately planned and carried out, but that they were the act of a fanatic who had some supposed grievance against these two officers whose lives he took. What are you to say of a Secretary of State who speaks in this way in the House of Commons? At the moment there is nobody in a position to contradict him, so the assent of the House is given to his statement, and the result is that the cause of India is hurt and almost ruined. And when the true facts come it is too late to take to task the men who have made these statements. I say again that the only reason why the noble lord was able to make this statement in the House of Commons was because he traded upon the ignorance of the members of the House. He knew he was responsible to nobody and that he had a majority at his back which would support him to any length he might wish to go. Therefore as I have said there has flowed from the irresponsibility of the Government of India consequences of a very disastrous character to the people of India. If those who know anything of the facts connected with the present Government of India come forward before the British public they are received in a way which is not very flattering to them. You have some kind of *arrière pensée* in your mind that these men must be talking something which cannot be the truth. Surely, you say, our public men are not so bad as this. Surely Lord George Hamilton, the son of a duke, and the member for the Ealing division of Middlesex in the House of Commons, and the Secretary of State for India, could not have been guilty of the charges brought against him? To a certain extent that would be right, because it is almost inconceivable that a man in such a high position should be guilty of these things. But what I have told you to-night, so far as the facts are concerned, has been taken from official Blue-books and Parliamentary speeches, and even he would not have ventured to publish these things if he were not perfectly sure that the public mind is a forgetful mind, and that statements made to-day are forgotten in a very short time, and that nobody would take the trouble to compare his statements in the House of Commons with the facts as contained in the Blue-book, and to take him to task for the discrepancy. The people of Acton and Ealing know nothing whatever of India; like most Englishmen they dearly love a lord—(laughter)—and therefore they are very proud of having the younger son of a duke to represent them in the House of Commons. But if Lord George had to seek election to the House of Commons or to any of the Legislative

Councils of India at the hands of the people of India, I am perfectly satisfied he would not get a proposer or seconder unless indeed he held in his hand a large batch of honours. Then perchance he might find fifteen or twenty rich men willing to support him. He would not, however, get a single vote from the general public to return him either to the House of Commons or to the local Legislative Assembly. Now I must bring my discourse to an end. The subject is one very near to my heart, and I could go on talking about the wrongs of India to an extent which I am certain you would not approve of. (Laughter.)

THE REMEDY.

But what is the remedy for this state of things? There must be some remedy. (Hear, hear.) I am not like my friend Mr. Dutt—one of those who take a very hopeful view of affairs relating to India. One solution for all these difficulties which I have brought before you, and the only way to remedy the irresponsibility of the Government of India, is to make it responsible to the people of India. But that I am afraid is a thing which even the youngest present amongst us to-night will not live to see. To call for that is merely crying in the wilderness, and as practical politicians we must look for other means of securing a remedy. One means which I think may be of great service to us is to make the Secretary of State merely the arbiter between the people of India and the Government of India. (Hear, hear.) Let him not be induced to give his assent to any measure until that measure has been actually passed and both sides of the question are before him. Let him be an impartial judge and not a partisan. (Cheers.) Many good things I think would result from that. But the great thing that is necessary for the good government of India is that the indifference—I had almost said the criminal indifference—that the people of England display in regard to the government of India should be got rid of. (Cheers.) Let them take a little more interest in the nearly 300,000,000 of human beings who are their fellow-subjects; let them concern themselves even to a very slight extent with the welfare of those millions, and then I am perfectly satisfied that the aspect of affairs will change. I do not accuse you, ladies and gentlemen, or the people of Great Britain generally, with want of heart as regards the Indian people. I believe that you feel for them and that you are satisfied when they are progressing properly; I believe too you are sorry when famine or pestilence or any other calamity overtakes them. (Hear, hear.) But you do not give effect to what is in your heart. I pray you to do so, for if you do, you will have the blessings of three hundred millions of human beings upon your heads. (Loud cheers.)

Prof. A. F. Murison moved: "That this meeting desires to place on record its emphatic disapproval of the recent measures adopted by the Government of India for the repression of free speech and freedom of the Press, and further avows its opinion that every available and proper means should be employed in order to bring before the people of England the condition and claims of their fellow-subjects in India." He thought those present, did they know the full facts, would be amazed at the moderate tone in which Mr. Bonnerjee had spoken; for if ever the records of India for the past two years came to be honestly written, they would form one of the blackest pages in the history of our country. The new Press Law defined the crime of sedition in the loosest possible way, and the result of prosecutions was to cause the Natives almost to worship the accused.

Mr. Wybroo seconded and Mr. Dutt supported the resolution, the last-named making an eloquent appeal for a more generous treatment of the Natives in regard to the Land Tax, and citing Bengal as an instance of the way in which permanent settlement had enabled the people to thrive and to protect themselves against famine. The Government of India must be placed on a wider basis: despotism had been tried and failed in many countries; it was now obsolete; it was not suited to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and the only way to secure a satisfactory administration was to give the natives of India some sort of representation on their legislative and executive councils.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Mr. Grimwade moved votes of thanks to Mr. Bonnerjee for his eloquent address, and to Mrs. Bonnerjee for her courteous hospitality.

Mr. De Layen seconded, remarking that the subject of India was particularly interesting to him, as he was born in Benares, and his father served in a distinguished office in India for fifty-six years.

The votes were agreed to, and the compliment having been cordially acknowledged, the proceedings were brought to a close with a vote of thanks to Dr. Aubrey, moved by Mr. Ernest Moore and seconded by Mrs. Brazier.

MR. CHAMBERS IN LONDON.

I.—ADDRESS TO THE LONDON INDIAN SOCIETY.

A large number of Indian gentlemen resident in London met in the Conference Room of the National Liberal Club on Saturday last, the 15th inst., to hear an address from Mr. Chambers. Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji presided, and Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee was among those present on the platform.

Mr. Chambers said he took it that the majority of his hearers were in England preparing for a life which they would subsequently spend in India. He therefore imagined that they would not have much time at their disposal for the promotion of the political interests of their country in their temporary abode, but still there were some things that they could do, and he wished to draw their attention to them. Their countrymen in India were very anxious that the English people should have a good idea of the Indian character, and the responsibility of presenting to the British public the Indian people in the most favourable light rested with men such as they were now living in England. He therefore earnestly appealed to them always to remember that their acquaintances in London would form their notions of the inhabitants of India from the manner in which they, Indians residents in London, conducted themselves. Let them never forget this, and in public and in private let them so shape their lives that no censure, because of their faults, could be directed against the country which had given them birth. (Cheers.) Their friends in India often complained of the way in which events were distorted and misrepresented in the English newspapers, and he thought if they would occasionally address concise letters to English journals, they might be doing a service to their country. Of course he knew that it was said that English editors would not print their letters. (Hear, hear.) Still he had yet to learn that brief and pointed letters to the British Press were refused because they were written by Indian gentlemen. As a matter of fact all communications to the Press must be of the briefest description, and he was afraid that his Indian friends in many cases had not yet learnt the art of saying a lot in a small compass. Mr. Chambers gave an instance which would illustrate his meaning. A young Indian of his acquaintance had sent a communication by the last mail to a London journal, and the editor of that journal had been courteous enough to return it to him (Mr. Chambers) with the request that it might be returned to the writer with the explanation that it was too long. Now this communication which had been refused contained excellent matter. It was well written. But no editor in the world, certainly not a busy London editor, would go to the trouble to wade through sheets of manuscript in order to cut them down to fit in the space he could spare. (Hear, hear.) Had this particular article been brief it would have been printed and would have done good. But it was too long, and it had found its way into the waste-paper basket. (Laughter.) Mr. Chambers explained that much good might be done if they attended some of the debating societies which were dotted about London. Probably no immediate benefit would follow, but the members of those institutions were the British citizens of the future, and it was of the utmost importance to get India's cause stated if possible by an Indian before them. (Cheers.) He further suggested that they should direct their attention to the municipal administration of England. While they resided here they should make it their duty to learn all they could about the civic life of, say, London; and when they returned to India, the knowledge thus obtained could be used to the advantage of the Indian town in which they might reside. (Cheers.) There could be no question that municipal administration afforded scope for a great deal of energy, and if they were thoroughly imbued with the modern ideas of the English municipal reformers, they would prove to be useful citizens, and such citizens were much wanted in India. (Cheers.) Mr. Chambers then directed the attention of his audience to a certain lack of moral courage sometimes displayed by Indians in great crises, and gave instances of moral lapses which were inimical to the welfare of India's political cause. He did not for one moment want his audience to imagine that the English people were faultless, but this could be said of them—having taken up a certain line of action they continued in it, and could not be bullied out of it. (Cheers.) He hoped that they would carry some of that John Bullism back to India and they would find ample scope for it there. However, the great thing they had to bear in mind was that they were, while residing in England, looked upon as representative Indian gentlemen, and if they acted in a manner which was not in accordance with the dictates of common sense, the disgrace did not stop at themselves, but far-off India would suffer because her sons in England had forgotten their representative character. (Cheers.)

Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee, in proposing a vote of thanks to Mr. Chambers, said that the amount of ignorance in England about India was appalling. He mentioned several incidents which showed how deep that ignorance was. He urged upon his listeners the need of dispelling that ignorance, and suggested that if Indians would study the history of their own country they would be in a position which would enable them to do a great deal to enlighten the English people about India. (Cheers.)

The vote of thanks was seconded by Mr. Khalil.

Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, before putting the vote, earnestly exhorted the audience to make the London Indian Society a greater success, and pointed out that efforts made in England were more likely to lead to something practical than efforts made in India. In London they were in the centre of the Empire, and strong organisations could make their influence felt. With strong organisations and a journal such as India was they could exert an influence of which they had no conception.

Mr. Martin Wood supported the vote of thanks, and it was carried with acclamation.

Mr. Chambers, in thanking those present for their appreciation of his services, mentioned an incident which illustrated the gross ignorance of the English people as regards India. A gentleman, a man of education and some position, recently asked him if there were many educated Indians in India. The reply, of course, was that there were many. "And," continued the enquirer, "when an Indian is educated, does he not become a Parsee?" (Laughter).

A vote of thanks to the Chairman brought the proceedings to a close.

II.—MEETING AT THE HACKNEY WORKMEN'S CLUB.

On Tuesday, the 18th inst., Mr. Chambers addressed a meeting at the Borough of Hackney Workmen's Club, in the East End of London. The club is wholly composed of workmen, and has a considerable political influence in eight London constituencies. The large hall of the club was crowded, and great enthusiasm prevailed during the delivery of Mr. Chambers's speech, which was confined to Indian subjects. Mr. Croucher, the Chairman of the Political Council of the club, presided, and the leading members were upon the platform.

Mr. Chambers, after having been briefly introduced to the audience

by the Chairman, said that he had spent many years in India, and he was glad to stand before a working class audience in order to speak to them about that part of the British Empire of which they had heard so much during the past few years. His object in coming to their club was, if possible, to get them to cast their votes in favour of the popular cause in India. (Cheers.) They were responsible for the good government of that country, and the sooner they recognised their responsibility the better it would be for everybody concerned. Possibly they had lately heard much that was evil of the educated Indians, and probably they had been told that that class were at the bottom of the turbulence which had arisen because of plague regulations. ("We don't believe it.") True, he did not for one moment imagine that the majority of his hearers believed all the false stories that had been circulated. But there were those who did believe them, and they must all strive to wipe the stain from the characters of men much traduced. (Cheers.) Mr. Chambers at some length explained the regulations adopted in India for dealing with the plague, and the method of carrying them out. He continued: "Now, I ask you, as man to man, what would have happened in your districts if such things had taken place? What would you have done had your wives and children been taken from you? What would you have done if you had been cooped up in a plague-stricken quarter? What would you have done if your business had been hampered by regulations the necessity of which you doubted?" The audience cheered to the echo these questions, and it was easy to see that Mr. Chambers's hearers entered into the spirit of his words. "Yes," he continued, "whether you had been Liberals or Tories, religious or non-religious, you would have striven might and main in your efforts to repeal such regulations." Yet the unfortunate Indian people, for acting precisely as they would have done, were called seditious, disloyal, and all things evil. Fortunately these regulations had been altered and peace again prevailed; but the mischief had been done. (Hear, hear.) The English public imagined that the unrest which prevailed was political, inspired by evil-disposed persons, and it was difficult to convince an ordinary Englishman to the contrary. "I therefore," exclaimed Mr. Chambers, "want each one of you to remember now and always that the turmoil of which you have read was not political in the sense we understand political, but it was merely an effort on the part of an oppressed and frightened people to get rid of certain dreadful regulations which they did not understand, and which subsequent events proved to have been absolutely useless." Mr. Chambers proceeded to speak of the Poona murders, the imprisonment of Mr. Tilak, and the arrest of the Sirdars Natu. "When these dreadful murders happened," he said, "you were led to believe that the educated Brahmins of Poona were the perpetrators. And this belief was put into your mind by the false writing of certain discreditable and now discredited journalists. Events proved how baseless were their surmises, but their writings frightened certain people here, who shouted that the Government must do something. And the Government did something which they have regretted ever since." Mr. Tilak was put in prison after a conviction for seditious writing, and at the present time two men were in prison, or practically so, and there they were kept without trial. "These things," Mr. Chambers said, "are done in a country the responsibility of whose government rests on your shoulders, and you still seem inclined to talk about the liberty of the British subject. I want you to know that at this moment two men—British subjects—are prisoners; men who have not been charged with any offence, men not brought to trial, and so far as we can judge likely to remain prisoners; and I want to know if this state of affairs meets with your approval." (Cries of "No, no"; "Ireland over again.") He was glad to see that these matters affected them, and he hoped at the next election they would spare a corner in their hearts for India and her people. Having described at length the new Press Laws, Mr. Chambers explained that editors of newspapers were classed with rogues and vagabonds, and could be bound over to "keep the peace" practically at the bidding of the official whom they criticised. He hoped that the advent of the Liberals to power would put an end to that un-English situation. (Hear, hear.) His personal opinion was that these laws would not and could not, be put into operation against the influential papers in the larger towns, but—and there was the great danger—the unimportant journals in out-of-the-way places, "the village Hampdens," would be frightened out of existence. This would be a calamity. What did it matter if these men did write disloyally? The British rule was solid enough to ignore such attacks. What did it matter if they did write stupidly? Their use was that they *did* bring to light complaints of value; they did express grievances which otherwise would not come to the knowledge of the authorities; and for this reason their liberty should be of the widest description. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Chambers next showed how valuable to British workmen was the Indian Empire. It contained 300 millions of people ready to consume the products of their labour, and surely it would be wise rather to make prosperous this multitude of people than to attempt the opening up of markets in other parts of the world. India was now part of their empire—a market ready to their hands. (Cheers.) If they saw the force of this, he thought they would agree with him that the policy to pursue would be to make these people happy, and not to render them hostile by continually carping at them and calling them seditious and the rest of it. (Cheers.) In conclusion he appealed to them to bring the question of India into their political arena, to make India's cause their cause, and to listen to the pleadings of a people who like themselves merely wished to enjoy the rights and advantages of British citizenship. (Cheers.)

At the end of Mr. Chambers's address, which lasted over an hour, a discussion followed, and each one of the speakers, all of whom are active local politicians, promised to tackle their condidates on matters Indian, particularly about the new press laws, whenever opportunity offered.

A cordial vote of thanks to Mr. Chambers brought a most successful meeting to a close.

PUBLIC MEETINGS ON INDIAN QUESTIONS.

THE WORK OF THE BRITISH COMMITTEE.

Elsewhere in the present issue of INDIA will be found reports of meetings addressed by Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee on Tuesday last, and by Mr. W. A. Chambers on Saturday and on Tuesday.

The arrangements for the large public meeting which is to be held in Westminster Town Hall on Wednesday next, October 26, are now almost complete. As was stated in INDIA last week, the Westminster Liberal Association is co-operating with the British Committee of the Indian National Congress for the purposes of this meeting. Posters, circulars, and tickets have been issued, announcing that the chair will be taken at 8 p.m. by Sir W. Wedderburn, Bart., M.P., and that the speakers will include Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee (of Calcutta), Mr. W. A. Chambers (editor of the *Bombay Champion*), the Hon. Mark Napier, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Mr. Romesh C. Dutt, C.I.E., and Mr. G. S. Ross. It is understood that a resolution will be submitted condemning the recent repressive legislation in India, and the arbitrary action of the authorities in arresting and imprisoning the Sirdars Natu without trial.

A public meeting was held at Honiton on October 11, to hear an address by a lecturer on behalf of the British Committee, entitled, "Can Russia invade India?" The lecturer showed that if we had remained within the frontier which existed in 1876, it was a moral certainty that a successful invasion of India by Russia could never take place, but if we continued the system of extending railways and roads beyond the Indus and the desert into the mountains, we were gradually lessening the difficulties of such an invasion. Mrs. Arnold-Taylor presided. There was a good attendance, and an interesting discussion.

By kind permission of Mr. W. T. Stead, a meeting of the Women's International Progressive Union was held at Mowbray House, London, on October 14, when a lecturer on behalf of the British Committee spoke on "The Forward Policy in India." Miss Campbell-Lang presided. Many ladies and gentlemen took part in the discussion. Among the latter a Frenchman and an Indian gentleman heartily endorsed the views of the lecturer.

At the Leeds Labour Church, on October 18, there was a large congregation assembled to hear an address by a lecturer on behalf of the British Committee, on "The Industrial Condition of the Indian People." Many questions were asked the lecturer and satisfactorily answered. Much sympathy was evinced by all present with the grievances of the Indian people.

The P. and O. s.s. "Peninsular" leaves London for Bombay on November 10 with the following among other passengers:—Captain R. J. Roche, Lady Sandhurst, Colonel and Mrs. Miley, Sir George and Lady Cotton; Mr. B. Belagi, Colonel Milward, Miss Milward, Captain F. E. Alleney, Colonel Kelley, Mr. J. Manuk, Mr. Jourdain, Captain and Mrs. Westlake, Rev. and Mrs. Bird, Colonel Kempster, and the Rev. Mrs. Rountree.

The British India Steam Navigation Co.'s s.s. "Manora" leaves London on October 28 with the following passengers:—Mr. A. Sherwill; Mr., Mrs., and Miss Weir; Mr. W. Thompson; Mr. and Mrs. Thurlow, and Mrs. Campbell (for Calcutta); and Miss Madden (for Madras).

The unexampled elevation which has fallen to Mr. Curzon, will (the *Pioneer* remarks) bring him into immediate official contact in India with men very much his senior in age. Not only the members of Council but all the Secretaries to the Government of India are considerably older than the Viceroy-elect. "There are," the *Pioneer* adds, "many of Mr. Curzon's Oxford contemporaries serving in various capacities throughout India, especially in the Civil Service, and we believe we are correct in saying that none of them has since risen to a higher position than that of Collector, District Judge, or Secretary to a Local Government." The precise meaning of this remark is not quite obvious.

General Sir William Lockhart left Victoria Station on Wednesday, *en route* for Marseilles, where he was to embark on board one of the Peninsular and Oriental Company's steamers for India, to resume his duties as Commander-in-Chief. Among those who saw Sir William Lockhart off were Lord Roberts and Sir George White, his predecessors in command of the Army in India.

The 1st Battalion Gordon Highlanders has arrived at Alexandria from India on board the hired transport "Nubia."

General Gatacre, who was second in command to the Sirdar in Egypt, has gone to Scotland, where he is at present visiting Colonel Wauchope, also lately home from the Sudan, at Niddrie, near Edinburgh.

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